

THE DUST HAS NEVER SETTLED

Robin Bryans

In 1940, the German Resistance sent Lonsdale Bryans with peace proposals to the British Government, followed by the ill-fated flight of Rudolf Hess who was imprisoned in Wales surrounded by intrigue which enmeshed the author of this book, sent to Wales from Belfast when 16, ostensibly as a student missionary. Robin Bryans tells an amazing story of his consequent life with the rich and famous, some bizarre not least because many murders and suicides among them had no inquests. In spite of threats about criminal libel from various governments, he reveals events about the Hess circle which the British and American authorities have embargoed until 2017.

He also reveals more than other books so far about his betrayal by the Soviet spy Anthony Blunt, who hid behind immunity-from-prosecution to avoid giving evidence in the High Court. The spy's evidence would have shown why the War Cabinet stopped sponsoring Lonsdale Bryans's peace mission, so costing millions of lives which might otherwise have been saved. Blunt also avoided giving vital evidence about the Bryans family's involvement with Lord Mountbatten and Rudolf Hess, while the author deals with claims that Blunt's visits to the home of their mutual friend, Louis MacNeice the poet, formed part of a Belfast paederast mafia that led to the 1970s sex scandal at Kincora Boys Home.

The father of Fascism, poet Gabriele D'Annunzio, took his women lovers to Rome's Palazzo Doria where he was shocked when the young Prince Filippo Doria returned from Cambridge with his English cousin, Adeline de la Feld, who later made Robin Bryans her literary executor. Known as Filippo and Filippa, the young cousins outraged D'Annunzio by preaching Futurism that ran counter to D'Annunzio's glorification of ancient Rome. Adeline de la Feld's niece, Bridget Parsons, after refusing to marry Prince George of Kent, caused her own storms when her step-nephew, Lord Snowdon, married Kent's niece, Princess Margaret.

Filippo and Filippa's grandmother, the Duchess of Newcastle, inherited from her father, Henry Hope, the fabulous diamonds that belonged to Marie Antoinette and which form a sinister part of this book. These jewels were disputed in the law courts for 140 years and in the 1970s blighted Robin Bryans's life, as though with their famous jinx. Queen Mary knew these jewels from girlhood and liked to visit the Newcastles' former London house where the Surveyor of the King's Pictures, Sir Anthony Blunt, lived as Director of the Courtauld Institute of Art. Blunt's friend James Pope-Hennessy, stayed with Bridget Parsons and Adeline de la Feld while writing the authorised life of Queen Mary. Before being murdered, Pope-Hennessy was earlier assaulted by John Sparrow of All Souls for accusing the Right-wing Warden of being 'a failure and regarded, not only by All Souls only, but the whole University with contempt and dislike.' Sparrow equated male homosexuality with genius and Robin Bryans's rebuttal of this featured in 30 years of High Court litigation in which only Bryans won damages.

His earlier books of autobiography have recently been paperbacked and *The Times* said of the first, 'He is on all planes at once; humorous, detailed and objective as a Brueghel village scene; quietly indignant over injustices practised by the toffs; puzzled, exploratory, expectant, as a growing boy . . . He writes as one with a true sense of poetry . . .'

£9.75 net



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COVER: William Balcombe's 1920 portrait of his wife Emily in fancy dress as St Helena with a relic of the True Cross for a ball at Brighton's Royal Pavilion. The jewel casket was loaned by the Hope family who had connections with the Balcombes and the Royal Pavilion from the days when the Prince Regent sent his ward/bastard, William Balcombe, to the island of St Helena as the East India Company's agent. During the first part of his exile on the island, Napoleon stayed with the Balcombes until discovery of their plot not only to smuggle French jewels to the Hopes in London but to aid Napoleon's escape from the island.

The Hope Diamond (top left) draws crowds to the USA's show-case, the Smithsonian Institute in Washington which notes, 'The stone's dark gleam gave only a hint of the sinister legends that haunt it - stories that it was snatched from the brow of an Indian idol three centuries ago, and that its curse has caused at least a dozen tragic deaths and has toppled two royal thrones.' For years the Hope Diamond formed part of the French Crown Jewels much favoured by Queen Marie Antoinette (top right) who went to the guillotine soon after the blue diamond was stolen. The Regency traveller and designer, Thomas Hope, was 24 when Marie Antoinette died, and he, later helped by his son Henry, started collecting the dead queen's jewels.

(Below) Mrs Thomas Hope who loved wearing those jewels at the Royal Pavilion. Henry Hope's only child, Henrietta, Duchess of Newcastle, also liked displaying her jewels at the Palazzo Doria in Rome where her daughter, Princess Emily Doria, was one of the many women admired by Gabriele D'Annunzio (below), the poet and father of Fascism. While D'Annunzio coveted the body of Princess Doria's niece, Countess de la Feld, he hated her political views of Futurism which did not care if Venice sank into the sea. D'Annunzio wrote glorifying ancient Rome which his protegee Mussolini wanted to recreate in concrete besides sending his storm-troopers into the Palazzo Doria.

For 140 years the Hopes quarrelled in and out of the law courts over the family jewels and in 1967 Adeline de la Feld planned to end the quarrels by selling the main collection of Hope jewels via Christie's and to give the proceeds to the Church Commissioners. (Below) Robin Bryans explaining to Adeline de la Feld how Christie's mistakenly sent the cheque elsewhere, a subject which surfaced many times during the years of High Court litigation. (Bottom right) Queen Mary had known the Hope jewels since girlhood, many of which would have gone to her family if Lady Bridget Parsons, the niece of Adeline de la Feld, had not unexpectedly refused the offer of marriage from Queen Mary's son, Prince George of Kent.

by the same author

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THE PROTEGE
TATTOO LILY
THE FAR WORLD

The Dust Has Never Settled

An Autobiography

ROBIN BRYANS

HONEYFORD PRESS
London

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Remembering Adeline de la Feld
whose own *impressions vécues*
influenced much of this book

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Preface

IN 1961 THE BBC asked me to review Alistair Horne's **Canada and the Canadians** and it delighted me to read, 'In central Alberta we visited an English peer who ran a 1000-acre pig farm. He had come out in 1919 with virtually no capital; had spent the first year in a tent with his wife and a young child, through a -30 degree F winter'. At last an English publication had accurately described Lord Rodney's acres as a pig farm, for he certainly had never been 'The Ranching Peer' as the press had dubbed him for many years. George Rodney was a refugee from the political/religious wars of Canford Manor in Dorset where his grandmother, Lady Wimborne, ruled as the haughty matriarch of the powerful Liberal family that once included her nephew Winston Churchill, and as the founder of Lady Wimborne's Protestant League. When F E Smith, later Lord Chancellor, was dismissed from the Protestant League, a Cambridge scholar Risdon Bennett, not only became her secretary but also tutor to the four Rodney grandchildren.

George Rodney's wife Marjorie, who was the pig specialist, had been inspired by her Uncle Hugh who enjoyed life as a boxer and Arctic explorer before suddenly becoming head of the Lowther family and settling into Queen Marie Antoinette's bed at Lowther Castle as 'The Yellow Earl' of Lonsdale. If King Edward VII referred to his friend Lonsdale as 'Almost an emperor, not quite a gentleman' the King nevertheless had an eye for Lonsdale women. So I was not surprised on my arrival at the Rodneys' Cottesmore Farm on the bank of the Saskatchewan River in 1949 to find royalty handing round the silver cigarette box given as a Christmas present by Edward VII.

Three American heiresses close to Edward VII were Jennie, Lady Randolph Churchill; Consuelo, Duchess of Manchester and her sister Natica, Lady Lister-Kaye, both being daughters of the fabulously wealthy Don Antonio Yznaga del Valle of New York and Cuba. When Edward VII stated that he would boycott any house that received a Churchill, Consuelo Manchester and Natica Lister-Kaye continued to see their former schoolfriend, Jenny Churchill, and when the King confronted Consuelo over this deliberate flaunting of a royal decree, the duchess replied, 'I hold friendship higher than snobbery'. And it was the friendships of those families scorning such snobbery which gave Cottesmore pig farm its hallmark when I arrived there in 1949.

George Rodney did not hit the international headlines by planting buckwheat and rearing '300 high-quality porkers - quartered in houses of

straw like the indolent Little Pig, but designed to keep out the cold', but took in farm pupils from European royalty and aristocracy in order to get out of the Prairie tent and into a substantial ranch-style house. King Edward VII had been godfather and namesake to the Duchess of Manchester's grandson, Lord Edward Montagu, who shared his kingly godfather's love for beautiful women and especially for heiresses. In 1928 Lord Edward found himself holding a one-way ticket to Cottesmore Farm but soon married his first heiress before deserting her and going on to earn at his death in 1953 the press title, 'King of Playboys'.

So I did not see Duchess Consuelo's grandson at Cottesmore Farm when I got there and another notable absentee with the dubious accolade of being a globe-trotting playboy admired by Hitler, was Edward VII's own grandson who ceased being King Edward VIII on marrying Mrs Simpson. He also lost the private Sandringham estate which went to his brother and successor to the crown, King George VI, although the new Duke of Windsor held on to EP Ranch in Alberta, the sole remaining property from his happy youth as Prince of Wales shooting hooded-mergansers and dumb-coots on George Rodney's lakes.

The Duke and Duchess of Windsor had no need to be told that they were not welcome at the Rodneys' farm in the 1940s when the Duke's uncle, Lord Athlone, the Governor General of Canada, sampled life at the pig farm. Lord Athlone's sister, Queen Mary, liked to know what was going on at her son's Alberta ranch and at Cottesmore Farm. She disapproved of the Prairie scandals and had read about their recurrent themes of playboys and the sale of historic heirlooms, especially diamonds. The war ended but not the currency restrictions on money leaving England to buy precious dollars, a situation made worse in 1949 when the Labour government dramatically devalued the pound. In contrast with the playboys, Queen Mary herself spent years making a carpet to help the national cause and a Toronto women's society bought it for a large sum of dollars. The restrictions, on the other hand, did not affect the playboys surrounding the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. Queen Mary never forgot her own youthful days of want when her parents fled England and lived in Italian hotels whose bills were paid by Peter Wells of Forest Farm in Windsor Forest.

Winston Churchill's mother also needed money when he was young, so Lady Randolph turned to her rich sister-in-law, Lady Wimborne at Canford Manor where Risdon Bennett ran affairs. One of Winston's first letters from prep school to his mother mentioned that her American schoolfriend, Lady Lister-Kaye, had visited him. Her niece, Adeline Lister-Kaye, was an elderly widow called Countess de la Feld, when she joined the exiled rebels at Cottesmore Farm who were distancing themselves from

family castles, and twice a month Adeline went there to answer letters which the busy pig-breeders could not cope with. The typed letters to Risdon Bennett at Yew Tree Cottage and to me at nearby Clayesmore School in Dorset led to many friendships described in this book. A Dorset Member of Parliament was Brendan Bracken whom I knew as the Minister of Information in his friend Winston Churchill's wartime government. In 1945 Bracken almost lost his seat to the dashing young Wing-commander Edward Shackleton, destined to be Labour's Leader in the House of Lords, and to whom my thanks are due for many letters.

Adeline de la Feld first went as a translator to Russia soon after Prince Paul Skoropadsky had a son Danylo, in 1904. She was not overpleased when in 1918 the retreating Germans installed Prince Paul as Hetman of the Ukraine. Ukrainian villages surrounded the Rodneys' farm and when she first went there in 1937 Adeline was angered to find the villages, like the towns and cities throughout Canada and the USA, decorated for the visit of Prince Danylo Skoropadsky, then living in Berlin under Hitler's patronage. Although William Heinemann of London had been the publisher of her early Chekov translations, Adeline later worked closely on Votes for Women with her publisher and friend, Sylvia Pankhurst, the militant daughter of the militant Emmeline, and who became a founder-member of the British Communist Party.

In 1949 Adeline de la Feld planned to leave Canada for New Zealand prior to settling in old age with her aunt, the Duchess of Newcastle, at Forest Farm, which Queen Mary had first known in the 1880s as the home of her benefactor, Peter Wells. Accordingly, I helped Adeline pack her papers and those jewels which Queen Mary knew came from the French Crown Jewels and which would have gone to the British Royal Family had Adeline's niece, Lady Bridget Parsons, not broken-off her intended marriage to Queen Mary's son, Prince George, Duke of Kent. On arrival in England, Bridget Parsons took me with Adeline's trunks in 1949 to Forest Farm for she remained on good terms with Queen Mary. Trouble only erupted when Bridget's step-nephew became the Earl of Snowdon on marrying Princess Margaret, the niece of her old love, the Duke of Kent.

I thank Bridget's nephew William, the present Earl of Rosse, for helping me sort out bequests of the Forest Farm effects and for getting in 1986 the Archivist of the Public Records Office to arrange the papers I brought to Britain from Canada in 1949. In 1956 Queen Elizabeth II commissioned James Pope-Hennessy to write the official biography of her grandmother, Queen Mary, and he did this partly at Abbey Leix while Adeline and her sister lived there. We talked of the 1937 visit to China made by Adeline's nephew, Desmond Parsons, who translated Chinese poets, just

as his 'Aunt Ad' had translated Russian poets thirty years before. Desmond's unpublished Chinese journal was read aloud and I suggested it should be edited by his schoolfriend then living in China and who today is Sir Harold Acton the author. I am grateful to Sir Harold for writing to me about so many of the characters I portray in this book, not least Adeline and her family. Another of Desmond Parsons's Eton friends still alive is James Lees-Milne who has written of the Parsons family on numerous occasions in his published war diaries, but I have to thank him for sending me unpublished opinions.

Neither Adeline nor I were surprised when James Pope-Hennessy died in a blood-bath after picking up a young man who ransacked James's home for money - 'Rough trade' as Sir Cecil Beaton termed such sexual encounters which he also enjoyed. But we were horrified when Prince Danylo Skoropadsky was murdered in London in 1957 on the eve of his marriage to the dynamic designer, Halina Melnyk-Kaluzynska. I have to thank Halina and Danylo's biographer, Professor Nikolaus Skripnik, for giving me papers concerning Danylo's life and death. Halina and our Swiss friend, Judi O'Connell, also kindly supplied me with papers of Countess Frederika Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee whose secret about her diplomat husband's relationship with Hitler was revealed only after her death. Because of the books published since the war the secret peace missions conducted by Lonsdale Bryans on behalf of the German Resistance movement in 1940 with the British Foreign Office are no longer secret, but still clouded in mystery. I am grateful to Jack and Max Bryans for helping me solve part of the mystery.

Jack's wife, Dame Anne Bryans, was appointed Deputy Commissioner, War Organisation of the British Red Cross Society and Order of St John of Jerusalem, Middle East. And there, in Cairo, two of our friends also worked for the Red Cross; Sally Perry, daughter of George Perry of Ceylon; and Betty Sims of Indiana. While in Cairo, Sally married Lt-Col Gerald Grosvenor of the 9th Lancers, and Betty married his cousin, Lt-Col Michael Crichton of the Royal Horse Guards. Sally died in 1990 as the Duchess of Westminster and only then did the press give away her secret that there never had been any such person as 'George Perry of Ceylon' but that she was the daughter of a barmaid, Muriel Perry, and a Guardsman called Roger Ackerley who used his good-looks to become 'a banana king' as described in a gay expose by his author son, Joe Ackerley, a Cambridge friend of the Russian spy Anthony Blunt.

In 1940 I went as a twelve-year old boy evacuee from Belfast to County Fermanagh and thanks are due to Betty Crichton, nee Sims, for bequeathing her husband's Irish papers to the Fermanagh County Museum,

including accounts of my life in Fermanagh and later in Lonsdale Bryans territory in South Wales where Rudolf Hess was a prisoner. During the war I saw much of Jack and George Cathcart and when peace came I took an ex-soldier, Pud Grosvenor, to Jack's small farm at Skea. The soldier bought the farm and proved to be another of Anthony Blunt's boyhood friends who delighted when one of his favourite relations, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, cruised on Lough Erne with Pud when he had become yet another Duke of Westminster.

When I returned in 1988 I went with George Cathcart and his wife to a restaurant which I had known in boyhood as a thatched cottage where George's mother ran the village shop. Shortly before the politically tolerant Michael Crichton died in 1970, I made a last journey from Belfast with him and Betty. I had just been interviewed by David Mahlowe in one of Ulster Television's *By This I Live* series and he surprised and confused me by asking why I had been staying with the Duke of Westminster. Anthony Blunt saw this unexpected question as an attempt to find out about his own living with the duke and the duke's fellow-Etonian Guy Burgess. My thanks to Ulster Television and the BBC for sending me tapes of interviews with some of the main characters in this book.

The Red Cross member most closely associated with Lonsdale Bryans's 1940 peace mission was Dr Carl Burckhardt, the Swiss historian who had been the League of Nations' High Commissioner at Danzig before going to Geneva as Vice-President of the International Red Cross. I thank George Balcombe and his mother for much material in this book but especially that about the Burckhardt family with whom George was more like a son than a professional colleague. I thank Dr Vladimir Alexandrof of Zurich University for giving me the Russian view of the Red Cross role.

At a Linen Hall lecture I gave in 1988 the Rev Gerald Sproule spoke kindly about the Fermanagh farmhouse where I spent two years as an evacuee, and again later in a BBC interview with John Keyes. I thank Rector Sproule for taking me all over Fermanagh in his car to check parish records essential to this book. I first knew Canon John Montgomery as our curate in Belfast in 1938 and I am grateful to him for sending me in 1990 a fat and useful package complete with illustrations of our lives before the war when his bishop, John MacNeice, the poet's father, provided me with more than diocesan funds after my window-cleaner father fell from his ladder in 1933.

When Louis MacNeice died in 1963, Anthony Blunt wrote of the poet, 'By far my greatest friend...was Louis' at school. Blunt did not reveal why they quarrelled in later years. Louis' sister Elizabeth was a medical student with Dr Hermia Mills at Oxford and both over the years wrote me letters about the MacNeice household and I thank them too. Dr Sidney McCann also

kindly wrote to me about Bishop MacNeice and the bishop's friends. I met Dr Arnold Aldis and his father Canon Aldis in 1944 in South Wales with Canon Lonsdale Bryans who awaited news about my latest sightings of Rudolf Hess. I am grateful for Arnold's views of the past.

The Superintendent of the North Belfast Mission, the Rev W T Buchanan, kindly sent me a copy of 'This is Your Life' which he organised for my cousin Jack Bryans's 100th birthday in 1985. No one knew the MacNeice household and Jack Bryans's preaching in the 1920s and 30s better than Anthony Blunt who viewed Jack's appointment in the 1960s as head of the powerful Orange Order as the best way of beating the bigotry preached by Blunt's Cambridge friend and later bitter enemy, Sir Knox Cunningham QC, MP.

Krishna Menon and Erica Marx were two distinguished publishers who not only influenced my life but also that of Anna Pollak whom I must thank for writing to me about them. Before she became one of Sadlers Wells's star opera singers Anna was, in her own words, a 'dog's-body' to the political Krishna Menon in the days when Lady Louis Mountbatten was learning from him about his disciple Jawaharlal Nehru, who, as India's Prime Minister, became Edwina Mountbatten's greatest love. I am also pleased Anna wrote to me about yet another of Anthony Blunt's friends, Hugh Benham, who also died in mysterious circumstances. But Anna's letters concentrate on our friend Dil, Princess Carlos de Rohan.

If Hitler soon enlisted the gay Prince Carlos as a storm-trooper, Dil quickly started a long relationship with the Berlin-based Russian dancer Catherine Devilliers. Dil became the wartime head of Swiss Affairs in Brendan Bracken's Ministry of Information and as such I had the misfortune of first meeting her lodger, Sir Francis Rose, the lover of Ernst Röhm until the 1934 Putsch when Röhm and so many others were murdered on Hitler's orders. Cecil Beaton who knew Rose well, noted of him, 'His life story is a long succession of suicides, killings, fatal accidents. In his wake he brings chaos'. Sir Francis certainly did not make Lonsdale Bryans's peace mission easier, for the fate of millions of Jews interested Rose not at all.

The head of Spanish Affairs at the Ministry of Information was the still-living art historian, Enriqueta Harris whose brother Tomas and sister Violetta master-minded the greatest double-cross of the war, Operation Garbo, from their Mayfair home. So much rubbish has been written about those wartime comings-and-goings that Enriqueta astonished me on 5 June 1986 by saying I should write this book. We were walking our dogs in Kensington Gardens with another art historian, Robin Middleton, when Enriqueta gave me a book on Picasso, jointly written by our mutual friend Anthony Blunt and by Phoebe Pool, who had already committed suicide by

throwing herself under a train rather than face interrogation about her role as Blunt's Russian courier in the 1930s.

When I got home from the park I consulted others involved and then wrote to Enriqueta Harris, 'You are probably right in saying that the various Blunt biographers may not get the real story, but whether you are also right in thinking I should do one is another matter, as I told you in the park. I do however think the moment opportune for me to sort out my many papers and letters concerning Anthony's world and possibly give them to Robin Middleton or to his art-history department at Cambridge. As you know he is a first class writer and lecturer and I have been involved with his art history circle since he took over George Balcombe's work at the Architectural Association in the 1960s. Those were the days when our long struggle with Dil was coming to an end'. I am probably the only person left now who knows how Enriqueta Harris spent years and much money helping Dil de Rohan, before the authorities forced Dil to flee England for her native USA in 1965. I am grateful to Enriqueta for many letters and those kindnesses which are the Harris family hallmark.

Tomas Harris and his sisters had a flair for producing lavish meals in the rationing days of the 1940s and Blunt, Guy Burgess, Kim Philby and Guy Liddell took along friends from the security services to sample the food served in sumptuous surroundings. Equally sumptuous are the many rooms of More House in Chelsea where Anthony Blunt and friends liked to visit its owner, Felix Hope-Nicholson to whom I am grateful for reading and correcting passages concerning his family. His neighbour, Lady Joan Duff-Assheton-Smith, helped me in a similar way, especially those passages featuring her ex-husband, Sir Michael, author of the spoof **The Power of a Parasol**, an article he handled with impressive power and elegance since he loved going around dressed in drag as the look-alike of his friend Queen Mary.

For over fifty years the author-politician Harford Montgomery Hyde loved to hold court at More house talking of his books on Oscar Wilde's circle since Wilde had known the house well and its owner, Adrian Hope, became guardian of Wilde's two sons. I am grateful to Harford for information about our native Belfast where he was an MP and where his old boss, Lord Londonderry, patronised our church and Lonsdale Bryans.

Montgomery Hyde's schoolfriend of over 70 years ago, Mrs Grace Smith, has sent me many letters and we have talked about disturbing events in 1940s Belfast, although it is hard to connect the child sex abuses then not only with allegations Mr Ken Livingstone MP made to Prime Minister Thatcher in the House of Commons but also with what he put into print, using my name, about Anthony Blunt's Cambridge friends.

The Cambridge clique admired Forrest Reid's novels based on love for young Belfast boys, and especially for Kenneth Hamilton, yet it was Reid's friend E M Forster who inspired the clique about placing loyalty to friends above that of one's country. It amused Blunt to hear so-called men-of-letters tell of Forrest Reid's extreme misogyny which, like the Athos monks', allowed no female over the threshold, Reid speaking to women only through his letter-box. In fact, Kenneth Hamilton's two sisters Grace and Jean, visited Reid's home nearly as often as he went to theirs.

Today, Grace is Mrs Smith whose schoolfriend Harford Montgomery Hyde, upset more than members of my family's church on being 'de-selected' as a Belfast MP in the 1959 General Election because he claimed that even the great and good King William III of Orange had been a homosexual. One of the professional actresses I early became enamoured of was Jean Hamilton who in 1947 married my friend Humphrey Knight whose cousin, Mabel Wills, brought me as a 16-year old student from Belfast to the Barry School of Evangelism, she being married into the wealthy Wills dynasty which had built Barry Docks in the 19th century. Mrs Wills's daughter, Mary Wills, served as a missionary doctor at the Shebeen Hospital outside Cairo built by seven of my grandfather's young friends who left Belfast in 1898 to start the Egypt General Mission. Four years before their arrival in Egypt, Rudolf Walter Richard Hess was born in Alexandria of solid Protestant stock with riches enough for a summer home in Germany as well as their substantial residence on the Egyptian coast.

The literature taken to the Nile Valley by my grandfather's seven friends included books by Sibella Bryans, wife of my grandfather's cousin, Canon Lonsdale Bryans of Brecon Cathedral. Such books as **Our Daily Lives: Eighteen Lessons for Young Women's Bible Classes**, first published in 1885, were essential evangelical reading. Missionaries certainly carried nothing written by her nephew Lonsdale Bryans, for his books dealt with his being the spokesman for the German Resistance movement which sent him in 1940 on a peace mission to the British government.

In 1988 Montgomery Hyde and I appeared on television in one of Channel Four's After Dark series, the UK security services being the topic of that particular hours-long discussion/interview which also included the former Home Secretary Merlyn Rees, and other security experts, Channel Four having billed me as an ex-friend of Anthony Blunt. Montgomery Hyde and I dined together before the programme because his sister, Diana, who had been my BBC producer, had died. Before the cameras, we delighted to talk about Adeline de la Feld's family upsetting Mussolini with their writings. I was then asked by Robin Ramsey of the Lobster magazine about my own early writing which he knew about from his co-editor Stephen Dorril

who had interviewed me for his book **Honeytrap**, the sad story of my friend Stephen Ward hounded by the Establishment to suicide in 1963.

But the Channel Four masterminds wanted to know about my war activities and the following day Montgomery Hyde, a barrister, phoned me to warn that a High Court writ was on its way. We laughed because over the years I had collected so many writs which all turned out to be 'gagging' ones to stop me talking and writing about the very questions put to me on Channel Four with whose lawyers we successfully warded off the threatened writ. Montgomery Hyde had written too many books about more than Oscar Wilde's farcical trial before Mr Justice Wills to be upset by such threats. As a former member of M16, he knew the security services and government law officers would prevent us from ever getting into a witness box to explain the mystery of why I, a sixteen-year old boy, was put with suspicious haste on a troopship from Belfast in 1944 when the impending D-Day invasion of France banned all civilian travel. Even spies playing chess need their pawns.

In 1956, while living in Zurich, I sent a typescript called **Born to Wander** to a British publisher who recommended that it should be the basis for a number of books of which six quickly appeared. Ironically, starting in 1988, the British government backed the re-issue of five of these books, perhaps because they show how I stepped into Lonsdale Bryans's place as a peace-maker.

In 1977 I lay in a coma in the intensive care unit of the Royal Sussex Hospital while the BBC and Southern Television broadcast my progress. I am grateful to Mark Langslow, a former clerk to a High Court judge, for daring to write to the press about the politics behind this, and to reporter John Francis for covering my case persistently until he announced my part in the unmasking of Anthony Blunt, having previously informed his readers how the Attorney General was told of my 'every move'.

The Attorney General concerned was Sam Silkin who shared his legal chambers with his South Wales colleague, Lord Chancellor Elwyn Jones who, as my early 1970s neighbour, often talked to me about the Nuremberg War Crimes trials where he had been prosecutor, and about the treatment of Rudolf Hess. The Chairman of the National Confederation for the Preservation of Welsh Culture was Professor William Gruffydd MP, of University College, Cardiff, who shared my interest in Hess being held prisoner in Abergavenny. Preservation of our friendship did not survive sharing it with somebody else, still alive, that caused me, like the playboys before me, to seek refuge at the Rodneys' pig farm in Alberta until the dust settled. Alas, the dust has never settled.

*Robin Bryans
London 1992*

Boy's Town

That most illustrious among many Irish missionaries to the European continent, St Columbanus, left Bangor Abbey in AD 590 with twelve brother monks to spread salvation across the sea. They carried the beautifully illuminated Latin missals they had made with a special quill vouchsafed to write nothing but the name of God while meekly kneeling upon their knees. No wonder other nations soon began to call Ireland the 'Isle of Saints and Scholars' while princes joined the throng at Irish monasteries wanting an education that studied the unbaptised Plato.

In AD 1898 seven untensured missionaries bearing large Bibles sailed down Belfast Lough to extinguish pagan darkness in the Nile Valley. With ploughshares from Birmingham they would make the Biblical land of garlic and cucumbers blossom in the desert. In the event, their metaphors proved more flowery than the desert, but agriculture took second place to their medical mission for the Arab and Jewish ghettos of Cairo where the squalor and disease matched that which the seven young men had left behind in the Protestant and Catholic slums of Belfast. The new Egypt General Mission soon became proud of its impressive Shebeen Hospital and its international team of doctors. The founders of all this, not suprisingly called 'The Seven,' included Martin Cleaver, senior partner in Belfast's still flourishing legal practice of Cleaver, Fulton and Rankin, and his colleague, William Fulton remained at home not only to run the law firm but also to advise the Belfast City Mission where their friend William Bryans had been a full-time lay preacher since 1890.

On every corner of Belfast's cobbled streets it seemed there stood either a pub, a tin gospel-hall, a church or one of their numerous variants. Salvation brought consolation to the old preparing for a better life in the celestial city above. But the young souls were not striving for those heavenly streets paved with gold, but for the work in the shipyards on Queen's Island and Mackie's Iron Foundry. With more men than jobs, the unemployed turned to their greyhound racing and the 'demon drink.' They found more conviviality in the pubs than in the mission halls. Still the missionaries did their best. The Reverend William Maguire, superintendant of the North Belfast Mission and William Bryans of the Belfast Central Mission united in holding 'Arab excursions' in the summer and Saturday night 'Happy Evenings' with a coffee bar and magic lantern shows' and pledge-signings' to combat the excesses of the 'porter houses' and 'gin palaces.'

My earliest memories of Belfast in the 1930s included the excitement of missionary services which always appealed to me more than the straightforward bread-and-butter thunderings of fundamentalist gospel preaching. The excitement, of course, welled up in me as soon as the lights went down and the magic-lantern slides went up with their furry-focussed pictures of South America's priest-ridden jungles or camels ridden to the Shebeen Hospital of the Egypt General Mission started by The Seven. Magic lanterns indeed! And who could resist such magic and stay at home when colourful continents called?

William Fulton not only delighted in showing his latest slides from Egypt in the Donegall Road mission hall where his seven friends had once met for prayer-meetings, but on the nearby corner of Sandy Row he conducted open-air services to plead for the souls of wine-bibbers and porter-bellies to turn from the demon drink and get saved. From the age of six months I lived at 130 Donegall Avenue and I first recall William Fulton preaching when my father and his brother came out of Moses Hunter's pub rolling drunk and started to dance to the evangelical chorus, 'I am H.A.P.P.Y. I know I am, I'm sure I am, I'm H.A.P.P.Y.' like a pair of shore-leave sailors.

Although I was deeply impressed by William Fulton's slides of Egypt nobody wanted child missionaries so, being born to wander, I found an outlet nearer home than Egypt or South America. Numbers 184 and 186 Donegall Avenue belonged to the crippled Ben Reid who kept, in the gable between the houses, six milking cows and calves, three horses, a goat, forty pigs, geese, turkeys and chickens which in daylight hours grazed on the seventy acres stretched out as nine marshes and four lakes known as the Bog Meadows. Here snapping-lads, as we called the Himalayan balsam, choked the many streams full of minnows. Then through this watery wilderness would flash the brilliant, metallic blue-green plumage of a kingfisher uttering its excited piping call and looking for a bigger fare than mere sticklebacks. Nothing in my life seemed so wonderful as the Bog Meadows and their carefree children from the gypsy camps who had never to wear second-hand boots to go to St Simon's School. Once I cut my foot so badly as I played with Mike and his sister Sophie, that I was rushed off to hospital. But even that did not keep me away from their caravan which so many people feared.

I was not castrated when we played mothers-and-fathers and the tinker children saw with their own eyes that I was truly a good Protestant from St Simon's because I had been 'knifed' by a surgeon as a baby in the rites of circumcision. They also heard my 'ship-yard bark', as my deep-seated cough was called, and rubbed my chest with larded camphor dust like they did the horses taken with broken wind. I believed this did me more good than all the bottles of cod-liver oil the Durham Street Tuberculosis Clinic gave me free

every Monday.

The surgeon's hallmark on my penis, of course, confirmed the fact that I was a genuine Protestant, but so also did the fact that, notwithstanding the number of Catholics who crowded into St Agatha's on her name-day for blessing of the throat against choking on fish bones, the Lord God of the British Empire had decreed that the hundred acres of the City Cemetery on the Catholic Falls Road was reserved for good Protestants with a couple of rood-by-the-old-measure walled off for the Jews. After all, in spite of crucifying Our Blessed Lord, the Jews remained the Chosen People of God and in a Christian city such as Belfast they could not possibly be buried further up the Falls Road in Andersonstown Cemetery where the IRA saluted the Catholic dead with live ammunition. In our marble-topped dressing-table that acted as an ironing-board, along with my grandfather's war medals, lived the wax certificate sealed by the Lord Mayor, 'The Right Hon Sir William Turner DL' granting my family 'The Right of Burial in Glenalina Extension, Section D, Class 3, Number 293.' The grave had space for four adults, of which my father's parents already occupied two.

My father was born to be a musician and trained to be a violinist but by the time he was twenty-five when I was born in 1928 he had become leader of the local accordion band. Like the relations of so many families in St Simon's parish, my grandfather's brothers and sisters, cousins and in-laws had gone to seek their fortunes in Protestant Toronto. Some did well in medicine and teaching, but the money sent home to 130 Donegall Avenue came from my father's uncle and namesake who had made a fortune by setting up a contract cleaning and maintenance firm for the big new buildings in downtown Toronto. Knowing my father's interest in bands, the visiting Uncle Bob brought a costume like those used by a Canadian band.

Because my father was now married and had us three small children to keep, his Uncle Bob set up a firm for him similar to, but smaller than the one in Toronto. There were ten new window-cleaning carts fully equipped and window-cleaning men to take them around Belfast's grander houses which mostly lay across the railway line from Donegall Avenue. So grand indeed were the people of Malone Road that we called their refined way of speaking English the 'Malone accent'. Bishop MacNeice lived on the Malone Road in appropriate episcopal splendour, and further down had the Dean of Belfast as a neighbour, admittedly with fewer rooms and smaller gardens but an equally tall silk top hat in no way offset by his withered arm. Nearby, with neither lawns nor driveway Canon Charles Maguire could be found at home in St Simon's Rectory on the Lisburn Road. The bishop's son was Louis MacNeice the poet who wrote in his book *The Strings Are False*, 'When my stepmother came home I would show her what I thought; her life would just not be worth

living. When my stepmother arrived, however, she brought so much comfort and benevolence with her that I dropped my resolution to obstruct. But for my own reading only I wrote an article attacking Late Dinner which she had introduced instead of High Tea. My stepmother's family was the wealthiest family we knew, had made their money in linen and had till fairly recently been Quakers. During most of her life my stepmother had spent half each year in the big houses on the shores of Belfast Lough and the other half in one of the greatest isolated mansions in Regent's Park, London.'

Louis in writing, and conversation, preferred to dwell on his father's poor Irish background when Louis's grandfather MacNeice worked for the Irish Church Missions as a lay-man like William Bryans at the Belfast Central Mission. The ordained member of the group was the Rev William Maguire struggling to feed the poor of the North Belfast Mission. In 1963 before Louis died I wrote of our origins and about his old friend Canon Charles Maguire who went to my mother's house to 'delve into the past. We talked about the rector's friend and admirer of those fortunately-over days, John Frederick MacNeice, the Archdeacon of Connor who became the distinguished Bishop of Down, Connor and Dromore. We talked of the bishop's son whom Charles Maguire remembered in his pram. That child was one day to write:

**I was born in Belfast between the mountain and the gantries
To the hooting of lost sirens and the clang of trams.'**

Like most children I grew very fond of the bishop's rich but deaf second wife who tipped generously as well as handing out missionary magazines about those without even trousers, let alone boots, in the heathen darkness of Africa. However grand the house and handsome his wife's linen fortune, Bishop MacNeice had another son whom we all called 'Little Mister Willie' and who Louis described as 'a Mongolian imbecile who could not say many words' although he knew the words of Ring-a-ring-a-rosie which his sister Elizabeth and I would play with Willie through thirty years, long after the three of us had moved to London.

Near Canon Maguire's rectory on the Lisburn Road lived Bob Harbinson, his wife and children in a house with an archway to its long backyard where my father's window cleaning equipment was kept. So closely involved were my father's business and drinking interests with Bob Harbinson, and so much time did I spend there, that on being lost at my first 12th July Orange Parade I was taken to the St John's Ambulance tent only to be rescued by a woman saying I was 'Mrs Harbinson's wee fella.' The intimacy with Bob Harbinson and his family meant also that each household had neither inclination nor aptitude at keeping account books which held the promise of a fortune to come like Uncle Bob's in Toronto. Unfortunately my father and Harbinson were much more interested in getting forty copies of the Canadian band

uniform complete with straw hats and bow-ties for the next 12th July Parade than in keeping check on the window cleaning business. My father and his bandsmen spent too many evenings in Moses Hunter's pub, and not just Saturday nights when William Fulton preached in the open-air, so that by 1932 only one set of ladders was left in Harbinson's yard.

The Rev William Maguire had died by then and so John Bryans became the top preacher at the North Belfast Mission and he commanded great respect when he competed for attention among the quack doctors and lesser missionaries on the broad steps of the old Custom House every Sunday afternoon. People called him Bible Jack or Hellfire Jack and my father was not likely to heckle this cousin of his on the Custom House steps because the fiery preacher was also a leading Orangeman destined later to become international head of the organisation. William Maguire's three sons also got ordained and one, Canon Charles, served as rector of St Simon's, the parish which included Donegall Avenue where we lived. The Maguire and Bryans families knew each other well and had often held services at 130 Donegall Avenue when my grandfather Dick Bryans, their Orange brother, lay dying from the delayed effects of mustard-gassing in the First World War. The house was an evangelical stronghold until my grandfather died and my parents and their three children moved into it.

It distressed Canon Maguire, no less than Hellfire Jack, to know that my father spent most of his energy playing music in pubs for drinks and the rest of it on his heckling of William Fulton's open-air services outside Moses Hunter's pub. And who could doubt that my father was an exhibitionist when he marched in his Yankee uniform on the 12th July or danced his sailor's hornpipe to mock William Fulton. The evangelicals firmly believed that 'Here we have no abiding city, but seek one to come' and condemned the demon drink and dancing and every other activity, such as the cinema and theatre, which made Belfast and other cities in the Hungry Thirties at least bearable. Nothing, however, could dim my father's wild enthusiasm for life. Unlike them he was truly carefree and happy as he danced around William Fulton's pilgrim band which dolefully sang 'I am H.A.P.P.Y.' All their dire warnings about 'Pride cometh before a fall' and that 'God is not mocked' fell on stony ground.

Then the do-gooders came to regret their finger-wagging when my father did indeed have a fall from his ladder at a tall house on the Lisburn Road where the 12th July Orange Parade had so recently gone by with my father leading his proudly-uniformed bandsmen. When he fell, his head got impaled on the garden rail and he suffered badly for months before filling the third place in 'Glenalina Extension, Section D, Class 3, Number 293.' My father's fall from grace in evangelical eyes would forever be perpetuated by his

memorial in the City Cemetery. Being saved and sure of a place in heaven, my grandparents earned a memorial of an open Bible in marble suitably engraved with ivy leaves and verses of Scripture. My distraught mother was told to leave all arrangements to Hellfire Jack. He knew what was right and proper in the circumstances. When she eventually went to see the new headstone, she was puzzled and then outraged to find my grandparents' memorial completely removed and another to my father standing in its place. Its bald language told nothing of her love and sorrow, but coldly announced, 'This is the burial ground of Robert Bryans.' **No Surrender**, the first book I wrote about my childhood, describes my frequent visits to the cemetery and includes a poem which I believed summed up my mother's feelings, since 'A funk alphabet speaking in hard terms of cash' on the memorial had nothing to do with 'The faint sweat-smelling flesh that was loved, until, and until and until...'

To make ends meet my mother got a job as a caretaker of Ulsterville Avenue School for seventeen shillings and sixpence a week, and the diocesan fund presided over by Bishop MacNeice, provided fifteen shillings for the three orphans. We three children did not get the MacNeice shillings towards our keep without working for it. The bishop's board issued us with pin-hole cards to take from door to door around Belfast as we went collecting money. People who gave us a penny pushed a pin through a square on the card, and those who gave us more than a silver threepenny piece had their name written down and eventually published in the parish magazine. The number of pennies and the number of pin-holes had to tally at the end of the day so leaving no loopholes for us to pocket the proceeds of our pin-holing efforts. My sisters and I divided up West Belfast and took a district each. We competed with each other, and with other orphan children similarly engaged, for the prize the bishop's wife awarded to the boy or girl who collected the most money in a year. A woman who actually saw my father's fall was one of three spinster sisters called Farren who lived in Mount Charles and she never failed to make many pin-holes in my card and arranged for me to have an annual holiday by the seaside at Child Haven Orphanage in Co Down. The Farrens were Quakers as was their friend Bea Greer before she married Bishop MacNeice as his second wife so becoming the poet's stepmother.

Every Saturday morning, sharp at ten o'clock, I arrived at St Simon's Rectory on the Lisburn Road to sign for the weekly fifteen shillings we got from the orphanage fund. The door was often opened by the rector's mother-in-law in Queen Victoria-look-alike clothes who understood those living in poverty because bringing up her own children had been a struggle. Now she doted on her grandson Frankie Maguire whose piano practice rang through the rectory. She invited me into the front parlour to listen because Frankie was

my friend and we both went to the same Sunday School though, of course, not to the same kind of public school, mine being the non-fee paying elementary school adjoining St Simon's Church and across the narrow road from the Star Clothing Factory where many of our neighbours worked.

Hugh Armstrong taught us on Sundays and still today he remains a friend who gave me late in 1989 news of Frankie in his California parish for he, like Hugh's brother John Armstrong, also became a clergyman. But a greater influence on me then was Hugh's father, another John, St Simon's organist and choirmaster who developed my love of music which doubtless came from my own father, so that today I live in a house which is principally a music studio always in use by composers and performers. The first professional singer with whom I sang in St Simon's church hall was Sylvia Gordon who wrote to me on 18 September 1964, 'Having been raised on the Donegall Road and knowing you to see, (I remember you as a rather pale boy, all nose and eyes) it makes your career very interesting. Recently I sang at one of Canon Maguire's concerts and I told him I'd been reading about him in your book..He is so pleased with your success. The audience at the concert doesn't seem to have changed since I sang there years ago. How I used to dread those concerts! The ...boys and their pals, (maybe you were even one of those) - cat-calling and whistling and myself feeling as though I had three legs and arms. Small boys don't seem to have changed much - after the last concert I had to clean the barley and spit from my clothes and hair. Still, I couldn't refuse the Canon, that dear soul who has bullied his way into a goodly number of hearts.'

St Simon's Church stands halfway between the Protestant stronghold of Sandy Row and its Catholic counterpart, the Falls Road. One man who followed his friend Bishop MacNeice into danger as an Irish peacemaker was John Ward Armstrong, Hugh's brother. On 22 July 1987 The Times obituary said of him, 'The Most Rev John Armstrong, former Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, died yesterday at the age of 71. With his death the Church of Ireland has lost one of its most distinguished leaders and the Anglican communion a formidable advocate of Christian unity. He played a full role on the international church stage and was widely known and respected in other parts of the Anglican community. John Ward Armstrong was born in Belfast on September 30, 1915, the son of a church organist. He was a choirboy at St Anne's Cathedral, and his love of the liturgy and music of the church never left him.... Various ecclesiastical appointments led to his succeeding in 1958 to the historic Deanship of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin. He remained at St Patrick's for the next decade, and his most lasting monument was, perhaps, the restoration of the organ. He loved St Patrick's and its place in the life of the city; and, at his own request, he is to be buried in the cathedral churchyard.'

The people of St Simon's and I naturally felt proud at John's enthronement as Primate, but we also felt sullied when the television lenses focussed on the Rev Ian Paisley being arrested by the police as he and his supporters objected to the presence of the Irish Prime Minister, Charles Haughey, at the service. But by 1964 I had already written in **Ulster: A Journey Through the Six Counties**, about my contempt for Paisley's rabble-rousing.

But it would be twenty years later in the 1980s that other writers would link my name with that of Ian Paisley when the sex scandal at the Kincora Boys Home in Belfast became a thorn in the British Government's side. Meanwhile in the 1930s I joined those boys spitting barley at singers such as Sylvia Gordon who shocked us with their high notes and vibrato from operatic arias. But soon people began to accuse me of acquiring the despised Malone accent, an inevitable outcome perhaps as I spent so much time on the other side of the Great Northern Railway lines. However much I loved running barefoot with my gypsy friends out on the Bog Meadows, I had a missionary's zeal in wanting to get Mrs MacNeice's prize for collecting the most pin-hole money and this meant frequent visits to the Malone Road's big houses where I would hide my boots at the gate and barefoot beg. 'A penny for the orphans, mister?' though more often as not the women rather than the men gave me the coveted coins.

I also became expert at collecting for St Simon's jumble sales that clothed us. In 1931 Archdeacon MacNeice, as he then was, wrote a scholarly account about the state of the Church of Ireland in Belfast. He recommended that Charles Maguire the incumbent of Lagonbank, 'a man of marked ability', should be released from the small riverside congregation 'to use his great gifts' in the large industrial parishes. The good rector was duly sent to St Simon-the-Zealot's amidst the linen mills and clothing factories. Mrs MacNeice's family fortune from linen helped to turn her husband's plans for the poor parishes with the rich mills into reality. Her old 'praying partners' in the Quaker community also rallied round. Apart from the three Misses Farrens' good works, the two Shepherd sisters crossed the railway bridge to preside over the Mothers' Union and its Guest Teas and Sales of Work. The ladies' attics seemed never to run out of discarded pin-cushions and antimacassars for the Sales of Work. If the bishop's wife had a similarly endless supply of books on 'the adventures of the missionaries in India, Burma, China, Uganda, Paraguay and Ungava' to quote **The Strings Are False**, this was matched by a never-failing glut of outsized linen tablecloths that more than accommodated as sheets on the horsehair mattresses of St Simon's parishioners.

Mrs MacNeice's presents and linen fortune gave off whiffs of mystery, no doubt through newspaper reporting of her family's prestigious entertainment in London. Anthony Blunt's mother and Louis MacNeice's stepmother had

more in common than evangelical good works. They both adored Queen Mary's children. Louis wrote of 'old ladies who lived in a forest of family trees, including Royalty's' and who waited agog for the Prince of Wales's arrival at the wedding breakfast of a MacNeice relation. In Belfast we had to be content with the British Empire's lesser fry.

The Rector of St Simon-the-Zealot, Charles Maguire, was not a religious bigot so much as an authority on the State of Northern Ireland and its churches of all denominations. Just as my family had sung valedictory hymns to the departing Seven going off to found the Egypt General Mission, so William Bryans led the singing in 1919 when another seven young men sailed to Canada and the USA to 'make clear the position of Ulster when talk of Irish secession from the Empire was coming to a head at this time. Rev C W Maguire was Delegation Secretary' according to Edwin Mason's history of St Simon's. A consequence of Canon Maguire's knowledge and experience led him and me into behind-the-scenes ecumenical talks during the goodwill period of early 1963. His skills had previously resulted in some extraordinary meetings of rich and poor in the early 1930s.

The Misses Shepherd joined the Widow Bossence and her spinster daughters, Louie and Ethel, and the deaf Mrs MacNeice not only to ensure that the second-hand pillow-cases and boots were laundered and polished but also to keep us boys from the Church Lads Brigade from putting fingers into the split-devon cream cakes before forming a guard of honour for the 'St Simon's Sale of Work Platform Party.' An illustration in Edwin Mason's history shows the first Prime Minister, Viscount Craigavon, leading the important visitors at our Cripples Institute in 1932. The photograph beneath reveals me on the stage in a 1935 pageant, and although I was only seven years old it was by no means my stage debut. Mason praises 'Charlie Maguire's concerts...Mr Maguire was always M.C. and the very life and soul of the party.'

Besides running our homemade local efforts, Canon Maguire got the Belfast Group Theatre and the Meridi Players to perform for us. Sir Basil Brooke, Northern Ireland's third and longest serving Prime Minister would exert influence on Canon Maguire and myself, even though I was never a member of his Unionist Party or supported his political attitude. The Englishman, Alfred Arnold, Brooke's secretary, also immersed himself in theatricals, not only writing and producing his own musicals but coming to St Simon's to do the make-up and later, in the 1960s, becoming chairman of the BBC's Arts in Ulster which reviewed our lives in the 1930s and 40s. It was at Alfred Arnold's flat that I suggested Prime Minister Brooke should invite Canon Maguire to conduct the 1959 Carson Memorial Service at the Parliament Building, Stormont. Alas, the canon's voice of moderation would be

shouted down by Ian Paisley wearing, literally, Sir Edward Carson's hat.

To this day I have in my home what Mrs MacNeice regarded as the most precious of treasures from Bishop's House - her husband's papers and books. These were inherited by Louis and his sister Elizabeth who in turn bequeathed them to me. Elizabeth and her husband Sir John Nicholson were doctors in London, and whenever I went to lunch with them other guests usually included people who knew the MacNeice family well. One such was Dr Hermia Mills who wrote to me on 26 July 1986 from Oxford, 'I had only seen John once since the tragic death of Elizabeth and hoped that he would come and see me here as he and Elizabeth were of course Oxford graduates. At Malone Road Willie was kept in a more or less special part of the house looked after by a faithful retainer. But naturally when the Bishop and the stepmother died Elizabeth had to cope. Elizabeth and Louis were very close. She gave me a book of his and another book about Bishop MacNeice and Louis written by you. But now, at last to return to the three weeks holiday in Ireland Elizabeth and I took in the early 1930s. We went by boat from Heysham and arrived at Malone Road on the eve of the Orangemen's March. I think that night we followed the Bishop in his police car but there was no special trouble. The next day we watched the procession from the bottom of the garden at Malone Road. I remember thinking I had never seen so many bowler hats. I also remember a banner showing William landing at Carrickfergus and another of Queen Victoria giving a Bible to a black slave!!'

Another person who lunched with the Nicholsons because of knowing the MacNeices in Belfast, was the then Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, Sir Anthony Blunt who would have fully understood the political implication of Hermia Mills's letter. Blunt's cool manner did not disguise his nervousness when I told him that the dead Louis MacNeice's own papers included an unfinished autobiography which eventually got published as **The Strings Are False**, a book heavily foot-noted by Elizabeth and vetted by Blunt who had earlier read the manuscript of my own book on Louis and other mutual Ulster friends. Louis wrote, 'In my own house (at school) the dominant intellectual was Anthony Blunt, who had a precocious knowledge of art and an habitual contempt for conservative authorities. Anthony too had a father a clergyman and we both resented the fact that our parents assumed us to be Christian, though neither of us would have dared to stand up in their presence and die for our lack of faith.'

Blunt and MacNeice had not been on speaking terms for some years through a row they had had over another son of an evangelical parson, Goronwŷ Rees. So many people as well as I were surprised after Louis died that Blunt should write, 'By far my closest friend and the strongest and most important figure in the school at that time was Louis, who was already a

person of extraordinary vivacity, imaginative force and charm. I shared a study with him in my last year and we formed the centre of a group of slightly bloody-minded rebels.'

In 1979 when Prime Minister Thatcher made her statement to the House of Commons confirming reports that Anthony Blunt had indeed been the 'Fourth Man' in the Russian spy ring, the **Sunday Times** sent two reporters to Blessingbourne in County Tyrone, the home of Blunt's Cambridge friend, Peter Montgomery. The reporters found Blunt's name and mine in the visitors book from the early 1960s a period when I met Blunt frequently and corresponded regularly with Peter Montgomery and his brother Hugh, the Very Rev Mgr Montgomery to whom one of my books is dedicated. Some of these letters eventually got into spy-books, often out of context and in one case entirely rewritten and distorted even though the correspondent, Sir Gilbert Laithwaite was still alive.

After leaving Blessingbourne, the **Sunday Times** reporters tracked me down to London and so my name entered the spy-books complete with sinister twists and deliberate untruths which eventually reached the High Court. The fact that Blunt's and Montgomery's Cambridge friends had appeared in my own books for over twenty years was totally ignored by sensation-seeking spy-book writers. Blunt and I used to meet frequently for reasons quite other than those dreamt up by those authors. While at Blessingbourne in 1963 I had written, and Blunt had vetted the following, 'Music of another sort was to preoccupy me for the following days which I spent at Fivemiletown. For me the term "The General" means one person and although his name is Montgomery, it is not the hero of Alamein, but Major-General Hugh Montgomery. I remember the General from my boyhood, a strange figure on his bicycle, Boy Scout hat perched on his head, going off to see if the Wolf Cub camp had enough milk, or pedalling down to a village concert, or wandering up into the mountains to find a block of granite he could take home to sculpt. Unlike his brother Field-Marshal Sir Archibald Montgomery-Massingberd, General Hugh retired from the army and returned to Ireland to fight bigotry. He set up headquarters at Blessingbourne, a house which his father had built with Pepys Cockerell son of the great C R Cockerell.

'Blessingbourne's beauty is in its landscape and the views afforded by its windows of the hills and woods beyond. Cockerell was also asked to design the village school on model lines for it was to serve a model purpose. Both Catholic and Protestant children were to use it together without restraint. This Olympian independence of faction had been the strength of the Montgomery family for generations. They would wear neither the Orange nor the Green sash nor join any institution which might infringe on human rights.

When the builder of Blessingbourne died in 1924 - the Father of the Northern Ireland Senate - his son General Hugh carried on this humanitarian tradition and founded the Irish Association to bring North and South together.'

Anthony Blunt knew that the nephew of Louis MacNeice's step-mother, Graham Lowry, had married General Montgomery's daughter Molly, and that their son, Robert Lowry had taken over running the Blessingbourne estate during my visits there in the 1960s. It was Robert and his wife who received the **Sunday Times** reporters in 1979 and who still live there today. In addition to this family tie, letters between Bishop MacNeice and General Montgomery still existed from the 1930s about the sectarian troubles and when I inherited these from Louis MacNeice, his old school friend Anthony Blunt deemed that I should lodge them with the Irish Association at Blessingbourne, which I did.

Blunt would have understood why Hermia Mills watched the Orange parade with the bishop and Mrs MacNeice from the garden. However much the bishop lauded the work of Canon Charles Maguire and was obliged to work closely with his dean, William Kerr, Bishop MacNeice would certainly not be seen walking with them in the 12th July parade which he regarded as provocative. Whatever anti-parent attitudes Louis may have got from Blunt at school in the 1920s, by the time Louis and W H Auden went off to write **Letters from Iceland** in 1936 even the sternly religious Mrs MacNeice at Bishop's House in Belfast had no complaints over what Louis wrote about the bishop in the travel book. To round off their book Auden and MacNeice jointly wrote a long poem called a 'Last Will and Testament' in which they satirised friends as well as leading politicians. MacNeice left Blunt, 'A copy of Marx and £1000 a Year/And the picture of Love Locked Out by Holman Hunt'.

For my appreciation of Louis and his father, Blunt and I studied the 'Last Will and Testament' and the result was subsequently published, 'They left a Leander tie and Pugin's ghost to John Betjeman, a bottle of invalid port to Lady Astor, and a sprig of heather to Compton MacKenzie. But the Ulster poet's legacy to his father contained neither levity nor frivolity:

**I leave my father half my pride of blood
And also my admiration who has fixed
His pulpit out of the reach of party slogans
And all the sordid challenges and the mixed
Motives of those who bring their drums and dragons
To silence moderation and free speech
Bawling with armoured cars and carnival wagons.'**

Louis MacNeice's oldest and closest friends were invited to speak at a memorial evening for him given in London at the Institute for Contemporary

Arts by the BBC. One of those in the 'Last Will', Sir William Coldstream, the painter who I had worked with in the war, chaired the meeting and others likewise jovially mentioned in the *Iceland* book also took part. But not Anthony Blunt. This was four months before Blunt made his confession in 1964 and obtained the all-important immunity from prosecution. In any event, with the security net closing even tighter around him, Blunt could not risk a head-on clash with Goronwy Rees and others who had taken Rees's side in the dispute over Guy Burgess.

T S Eliot had been the Faber and Faber director when the two poets went off to Iceland, but in 1963 he was unable to attend the ICA memorial evening so the other poetry director Charles Monteith did, writing to me the next day, 'I very much admired all you said last night about Louis' father. Indeed, it was, on the whole, a most moving and successful evening, I thought. Yours ever, Charles.' A Belfast man himself, Monteith met many of Louis's relations and friends at my home. Fabers published 17 books by me, most of them being commissioned by Charles Monteith, and only two of them being sent for libel vetting to Peter Carter-Ruck. There was no point, anyway, because as soon as the first two, **No Surrender** and **Song of Erne** were published in 1960 some of Anthony Blunt's friends began undoing the legal disguises and revealing who was who in the books.

During his Belfast boyhood Charles Monteith was taught French by James Boyce who interviewed Monteith years later for a BBC programme on my Ulster books. Eventually, James Boyce led a BBC Television unit to the places and people of my own boyhood, so that in 1963 Fabers commissioned me to write **Ulster: A Journey Through the Six Counties**, in which I identified people such as Canon Charles Maguire by their actual names. Although Fabers saw the futility of attempting libel disguises in my books, courtesy nevertheless obliged them to submit the page proofs of **Ulster** to the Ulster Office, since not only had the government arranged for my guide to be Blunt's old friend, Peter Montgomery, then President of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, but tax-payers' money paid for the book's official reception in London and Belfast. However, Sir Francis Evans, the Ulster Agent, did ask for a change to what I had written about internment without trial. In 1989 the same book was reissued with a new preface and even more drastic surgery was demanded. But by then I had become accustomed to such official interference. Too much had been written about Blunt and myself for the comfort either of a Tory or Labour government.

When I refused to follow government guidelines over my writing, the police came to interview me on many occasions as Mr Ken Livingstone MP is correct in stating. But Ken Livingstone is quite wrong in writing that I had been 'a former lover of Guy Burgess and Blunt'. But there is some truth in

Livingstone's claim, 'When Blunt had been granted immunity from prosecution, he had insisted that the immunity cover all crimes he had committed in addition to his treason. Desperate to ensure the success of the cover-up M15 granted his demand. In his "interrogations" by Wright, Blunt is almost certain to have admitted that one of his crimes was involvement in a child sex ring based on the Kincora boys home in Northern Ireland. The origins of this child abuse ring dated back to his days at Cambridge where he had become involved sexually with a group of upper class paedophiles from Northern Ireland. In the years after Cambridge, Blunt maintained his contacts and occasionally travelled to Ireland for long weekends spent abusing young boys at parties attended by some well-known names from British and Irish ruling circles'.

Two years before writing *Livingstone's Labour*, the author had given an exclusive interview to Liam Clarke who wrote, 'Labour MP Ken Livingstone has predicted that a gay sex scandal "which will make Profumo look like a tea party" is likely to hit the Northern Ireland establishment. The Brent East MP made his comments in an exclusive interview with The Irish News immediately after he had used a Parliamentary question to cast doubt on Sir George Terry's 1982 inquiry into the RUC's handling of the Kincora Boys' Home scandal...In her reply the Prime Minister advised him to put any evidence he had in the hands of the "prosecuting authorities." Mr Livingstone's source is Robert Harbinson Bryans, an author whose best known work, *No Surrender*, is to be produced shortly by the BBC.'

All the spy authors agree that Anthony Blunt and his Cambridge friends were influenced significantly by E M Forster. In *A Chapter of Accidents* Goronwy Rees states of Guy Burgess, 'He was the Cambridge liberal conscience at its very best, reasonable, sensible, and firm in the faith that personal relations are the highest of all human values. He reminded me of E M Forster's famous statement that if he had to choose between betraying his country or betraying his friend, he hoped he would have the courage to betray his country.'

An Ulsterman who went to Cambridge with Peter Montgomery and also came under the influence of Anthony Blunt, was Sir Knox Cunningham QC, MP who was PPS to Prime Minister Harold Macmillan at the time I was commissioned to write *Ulster*. In reference book entries Cunningham took pride in mentioning his political position and the fact that he had been 'Heavy Weight Boxing Champion Cambridge University'. E M Forster, however, sent-up this well-known Orangeman who delighted to play a Lambeg Drum at the 12 July celebrations until his wrists bled. Writing to the Belfast novelist Forrest Reid during the war about the London blitz, Forster said, 'How Knox can enjoy the situation passes me, but I suppose if your head is under water

or being hit by a glove it doesn't notice anything outside it.'

Another, though utterly different boxer from the same Blunt circle at Cambridge, was John Davenport, the literary critic, who so disliked his legacy in the Iceland 'Last Will' that he threatened to sue. Although both boxers had quarrelled with E M Forster, since both also had Faber interests, they insisted on advising me how to deal in my book with Forster and Forrest Reid, and persisted in superior knowledge about who had been who in the two authors' beds. I stayed at Owlstone Road in Cambridge with the Scottish poet, Jimmy Burns Singer, where Davenport spent most of the day because he, like others who knew her, was intrigued by Jimmy's American wife, Marie, a black psychoanalyst with an outsize character who had more than Cambridge high and low tables summed up. Davenport himself had been trying for years to analyse E M Forster's mind and his frequent interruptions made it difficult for me to talk alone with Forster. Davenport would burst in where we sat, and announce that Kingsley Amis was coming to drinks at Owlstone Road or that he, Davenport, knew which of our friends had given Guy Burgess the tip-off to get out of the country. These, of course, were simply excuses, for by the aggressive way Davenport flung the door open and from the nature of his allegations about E M Forster's life style Davenport obviously hoped to catch the aged novelist in an act of fellatio with me.

Davenport was a disappointed poet whose best known work is a second-rate novel he wrote with Dylan Thomas and he accused certain Faber directors of keeping him away from T S Eliot who had heralded his promise as a young man. John's aggressiveness gave me some embarrassing moments when he met those Faber directors at my home, and his behaviour is well-summed-up in *The Journey Up* by Geoffrey Faber's schoolfriend Maurice Collis. We were all friends of the painter Sir Francis Rose and one day Davenport 'came down rather drunk, rang the bell and hit Francis when he opened the door. Francis fell and seemed stunned. Alarmed what Davenport might do next I rang for the police. Before they arrived, however, Francis came to and made it up with Davenport.' In my own case it was usually Special Branch who came to see me about Francis Rose and his involvement in Anthony Blunt's spy circle.

Kingsley Amis's memoirs put the 'slight, even frail' Jimmy and the 'very black black' Marie Battle Singer into proper perspective. Jimmy claimed that Pope and Swift were not merely friends 'but boyfriends,' and when Marie danced at the Amis's house in Cambridge with the novelist Anthony Powell, she was heard to say to him, 'I sure would like to shag with you, Tony, you old belly-rubber, you.' I stayed only twice with the Singers in Cambridge at their one-bedroom flat for sleeping on the living-room divan was asking for trouble. Marie worked as a psychoanalyst in Great Ormond

Street around the corner from where I lived in the 1960s and so in fine weather she brought her lunch sandwiches to eat on my roof garden, sometimes with John Davenport to whom she was devoted even though knowing his nature. She told Kingsley Amis, 'Woman desirous of being mistreated - and you know and I know there are plenty of them around, simply contact Mr Davenport and she'll get all she can handle and very welcome. I can't understand why his life seems to be so complicated.'

When Davenport died in 1966 my publisher, Charles Monteith, sent me *The Times* obituary, 'Mr John Davenport who died yesterday at Worthing will be remembered by a vast circle of intellectual acquaintances for his wit, vast erudition and entertaining conversation which all his friends had hoped would evolve into the definitive book which they and he had longed to see. Davenport was one of a brilliant literary group emerging from Cambridge University in the early thirties...'

Anthony Blunt could not tolerate Davenport's drunken questioning about the old Cambridge days but Peter Montgomery was too polite to rebuff the aggressive Davenport who nevertheless was a knowledgeable musician and who, in addition to having meals at home with my publishers and Cambridge friends, often met me with Peter Montgomery at concerts. The 'brilliant literary group' at Cambridge to which Davenport belonged did not include Knox Cunningham despite the latter's interest in books about his friends such as Guy Burgess and Forrest Reid. But Cunningham and Davenport both boxed for the university and E M Forster aptly noted that Cunningham's head 'being hit by a glove it doesn't notice anything outside it.'

The amateur Davenport and the professional psychoanalyst, Marie Battle Singer battled it out by the hour as to what Alexander Pope might have done to Jonathan Swift in bed, or as to what caused Peter Montgomery to leave Blunt's bed for Henry Maxwell's rooms at Trinity College. As my Cambridge visits centred on E M Forster and Forrest Reid, Davenport gave me the history of *le vice anglais*, even though we were all aware that erotic flagellation is not a thrill exclusively reserved for English public schools or the navy.

In 1935 E M Forster stated, 'I want to love a strong young man of the lower classes and to be loved by him and even hurt by him. That is my ticket...' John Davenport knew well how certain homosexuals liked to be hurt, preferably caned, by working class boys. But if the large, bearded Davenport was extremely strong he was not a young man and certainly not of the lower classes. These were the circumstances in which I tried to discuss Forrest Reid's love of young men with E M Forster.

Afterwards I wrote, with the approval of Blunt, Knox Cunningham and the Ulster Office, 'Just before going over to Northern Ireland I spent a

weekend in Cambridge. While talking to E M Forster in his rooms at Kings the Mourne Mountains drifted into the conversation like a recollected dream. In 1911 Forster went to Northern Ireland, the year *The Bracknells* was published. Intensely moved by the book's delicate beauty Forster wrote to its author Forrest Reid. By coincidence Reid was living very near Forster's lodging in Belfast and the authors became friends. They went rowing up the River Lagan, explored the Mournes, and spent winter evenings round the fire with Reid's latest menagerie of cats and dogs.

'And when the Ulsterman died thirty-six years later E M Forster wrote in his book *Two Cheers for Democracy*; "He was the most important man in Belfast, and, though it would be too much to say that Belfast knew him not, I have sometimes smiled to think how little that great city, engaged in its own ponderous purposes, dreamed of him or indeed of anything. He who dreamed and was partly a dream. A dream not only compounded of visions, Mediterranean and Celtic, but of the "moral fragrance" which he prized and pursued and diffused."

'After the growth of his friendship with E M Forster, Forrest Reid wrote his trilogy of boyhood *Young Tom*, *The Retreat*, and *Uncle Stephen*. Although the setting is Ulster, the boys could easily have been Greeks. I can approach the dreams of Forrest the dreamer more through his *Apostate*, one of the most beautiful and disturbing stories ever written about growing up. Somebody commented once that E M Forster's own characters were simply Forrest Reid's boys grown up.

'The Ulsterman was already old when I spent some of my own boyhood in the Lagan Valley, but he was a familiar sight. I remember him looking rather as James Sleator painted him years before - intense eyed, pince-nez with more than a glint of mischief in the expression.'

In the 1989 edition of *Ulster* I added, after being requested to delete the dead Knox Cunningham's name, 'In this book I call the author Forrest Reid "a familiar sight" in the Belfast of my boyhood. Unlike some writers, I would not call Reid a misogynist who would only talk to women through his letter-box, because two favourite visitors to his home were the sisters Grace and Jean Hamilton. In 1917 Reid became "honorary assistant editor" on *Kenneth's Magazine* started by the schoolboy Kenneth Hamilton with help from his sister Grace. Over seventy years later in her London flat Grace Hamilton was asking me whereabouts in Belfast my 1988 lecture would be given. At the mention of the Linen Hall Library we instantly thought of Forrest Reid's words; 'curled up in a low deep seat, I would sit gazing out between the trees...'

I added this because I had disagreed with those who not only preached that Forrest Reid was a misogynist but who also believed that in order to be

a genius such as Michaelangelo or Oscar Wilde, the painter or author must be a practising male homosexual. Forrest Reid was deeply attached to young Kenneth Hamilton, yet scholars who suggest buggery was involved risked rousing the ire of Kenneth's sister Grace, as I know from her letters and long talks with her.

In his biography of Forrest Reid, **The Green Avenue**, Brian Taylor quotes Grace Hamilton as saying how her young brother met the author in a park and 'His love for Kenneth I took wholly for granted, but naturally enough, I suppose, I felt left out. He used to pet the boy taking him on his knee. I saw nothing out of the way in this either, apart from wondering what anyone could see that was cuddly in a knobble-kneed schoolboy.' Forrest Reid, of course, could, and what Grace afterwards called 'those exciting secrets shared between Reid and my brother from which girls were shut out' were always in the air. Always, that is, until the tragic end of their relationship.

In 1940 Reid wrote of Kenneth; 'He became a sailor but after two or three voyages forsook the sea. He wrote to me regularly, and I know he was planning a visit to the South Sea Islands; but the last news of him, received from strangers, was that he had ridden out alone one day into the Australian bush. From that ride he did not return, and no trace of what happened was ever discovered.'

Grace Hamilton has herself written what happened afterwards. The heartbroken Reid gathered all the manuscripts of **Kenneth's Magazine** and other writings by the young boy and took them to the Hamilton home in Rosetta Avenue. These included poems of a moving nature the young sailor sent his old admirer, such as;

Did I hear a voice so sadly call,
Did I see a face I knew,
Or when asleep did I dream it all,
Tell me, did I dream of you,
Of fields of green, of roads so long and grey,
And then the cold winds blew,
They blew, and sent them far away -
Tell me if my dream is true?

While he was in Egypt in the First World War E M Forster wrote to Forrest Reid and asked for a photograph of Kenneth Hamilton and in 1963 he was delighted that Faber's blurb for **No Surrender** compared my work with that of Forrest Reid. Because of homosexual overtones in the book I was regarded not only as an author akin to Forrest Reid but also as a person involved with a Belfast set that in the 1980s would be exposed over the Kincora sex scandal. People in the security services who interviewed me included Major Fred Holroyd and Captain Colin Wallace who both left their

undercover work in Ulster under strange circumstances. Paul Foot who has written about Knox Cunningham's and my place in Blunt's world, later wrote the disturbing, and as far as I could gauge, well-documented book **Who Framed Colin Wallace**. If Hellfire Jack Bryans was not 'the Rev' which Foot calls him, he was certainly the Grand Master of the Orange Order who sanctioned the inauguration of the new Tara Lodge which William McGrath founded on 28 June 1970, Ireland's Heritage Orange Lodge. By that time, Hellfire Jack's religion had taken on board a number of exotic doctrines not usually associated with a North Belfast Mission such as 'Finn MacCool went to school with the Prophet Jeremiah', to quote the old Irish saying on which I elaborated in my books and on which Hellfire Jack further elaborated like other leading Orangemen who could similarly be termed British Israelites. By the early 1970s a number of people had become disquieted because nothing was being done to stop William McGrath bugging boys officially in his care at Kincora and allowing other Orangemen to do the same.

Knox Cunningham's fellow-Unionist MP, Harford Montgomery Hyde had an advantage in his understanding of both the homosexual world and that of the Orange Order. Born at Belfast in 1907 he became a fellow student of Grace Hamilton and after a wartime career in M15 and M16 was elected as Unionist MP for North Belfast. Not all his constituents approved when he repeatedly urged the government to adopt the Wolfenden Report's recommendation about liberalising the Victorian laws of homosexuality. But when Montgomery Hyde gathered support for his campaign by saying that no less a person than the great King William III of Orange himself had been an active homosexual he was quickly 'deselected' for the 1959 General Election. He immediately caused further outrage by using his barrister's skill to prove the authenticity of the Black Diaries written by Roger Casement.

The last time I met Montgomery Hyde before he died was in the Channel 4 television studio during 1988 for one of their After Dark late night programmes where he and I joined the former Ulster Secretary Merlyn Rees and others responsible for the security services. Press announcements of the programme billed me as an associate of Anthony Blunt so I was not surprised when Robin Ramsey, editor of the intelligence magazine **The Lobster**, raised the subject of my letters to and from Blunt's friends and the sex scandal at Kincora. Nor did it surprise me the following day when Montgomery Hyde phoned me to say there was a threat of a High Court injunction.

During the months it took the television lawyers to deal with the defence of what I had said, Montgomery Hyde and I phoned each other frequently, not only about the threat but also how our lives had changed since I first met him in 1945 at Victoria Station on his way to the funeral of Lord Alferd Douglas. In 1988 he knew I was researching this book and seeing

Grace Hamilton about the old days with Forrest Reid. During our phone calls he always sent a message to Grace and seldom, if ever, failed to mention the recent death of his sister Diana who had been one of my first BBC producers. That Belfast circle had been close-knit and well-known. Although Montgomery Hyde had championed both Oscar Wilde and Alfred Douglas and numerous other homosexuals in his fifty books, he was himself heterosexual having had three wives. Nevertheless his all-absorbing lawyer's mind became obsessed with the various ramifications of homosexuality to the extent that he endangered his political career by claiming that 'King Billy' acted homosexually.

When that other Belfast barrister, Charles Monteith, read the manuscript of my book **Up Spake the Cabin Boy**, he wrote to me about the exact wording of the ancient Orange toast to King William. Knowing how seriously these matters are taken in Northern Ireland, I carefully checked the toast out with both Montgomery Hyde and Knox Cunningham, before Fabers published it as, 'Here's to the glorious, pious and immortal memory of the great and good King William who saved us from slavery and knavery, witchery and bitchery, thuggery and buggery, brass farthings and wooden shoes, and to hell with the Bishop of Rome. And he who will not drink this toast may he be crammed, jammed and rammed down the big gun of Athlone, and may I be there with a flaming flambeau to touch him off, and may he fly round the world like bees round a treacle pot on a summer's afternoon.' Such attention is paid to detail that the Ulster Prime Minister, Sir Basil Brooke, took exception and invited me to his stately pile to see King William's own goblet and to point out several errors in my rendering of the verse. This version I used in my next Ulster book **Songs Out of Oriel**.

Not only had King William at the Battle of Boyne saved good Protestants from thuggery and buggery but William McGrath underlined the Orangeman's heritage by issuing declarations such as, 'By right of Calvary Ireland belongs to Christ' and 'Every home, office, factory should be bright and shining, showing the world that Protestantism stands for, at least, cleanliness and order and industrious living.' But now British Intelligence officers were accusing William McGrath and his Orangemen of using thuggery to get the buggery at Kincora Boys Home.

I talked and wrote to Grace Hamilton about her old friend Montgomery Hyde but we did not linger over the Kincora case because she had strong feelings about the people who dared to suggest that her brother Kenneth had been involved in buggery with Forrest Reid. She and many others believed the love of the man for the boy had been sacred. Proof of this surely was the fact that the author had collected together all Kenneth's writings and took them over to the dead boy's mother as a form of a memorial which Reid could share only with the grieving Mrs Hamilton. Indeed, so solemn was the

occasion that even Grace was excluded. Nothing could be more different from the situation at Kincora where buggery was achieved by force and fear. Nor was Grace being naive in her attitude to Reid's love for her brother, since she well understood the homosexual motivation of those who indulge in child sex abuse because her adult life was shattered when her only child was first seduced at the age of three.

Among the people who tried to get something done about the Kincora sex abuse was Captain Colin Wallace who stated in his report to the military authorities 'Other people closely associated with McGRATH and aware of his activities are Thomas PASSMORE, Rev PAISLEY, Rev Martin SMITH, James MOLYNEAUX and Sir Knox CUNNINGHAM QC MP.' For his pains, Captain Wallace was relieved of his duties in Ulster and he went to live in Sussex whose Chief Constable, Sir George Terry, was then sent to conduct an independent inquiry. But as Ken Livingstone quite correctly states, it was George Terry's police who had earlier interviewed me about what Sir Knox Cunningham's gay friends were up to in Belfast. I was perplexed about the whole business which was quite clearly a government cover-up.

The question then arose as to whether it was a cover-up the political parties could exploit to their own advantage, because they knew that I had discussed the matter with senior statesmen of both Tory and Labour parties long before Messrs Livingstone and Foot wrote their books or sent their researchers to copy my papers. I knew enough about the sexual abuse at Kincora without it being necessary for me to visit the place and I expressed my disquiet at William McGrath's activities there to his Grand Master and religious leader, Hellfire Jack Bryans. On the other hand, Anthony Blunt and his Ulster cronies had been to my homes in Ulster and London frequently. Kenneth Hamilton's other sister, Jean, was an actress who married one of my three Knight friends and it was to Christopher Knight's houseboat, the Blue Heron, moored at Strand-on-the-Green, West London, that Anthony Blunt in 1965 made numerous calls to talk with me about a mission which to date the government has kept secret.

Ten years later Louis MacNeice's widow, Hedli, and daughter Bimba joined Mr and Mrs Goronwy Rees as tenants at 5 Strand-on-the-Green owned by the Armitage family who lived at No. 1 where Elizabeth Nicholson brought me the remainder of Bishop MacNeice's papers. Also to Strand-on-the-Green came the spycatchers Andrew Boyle and Richard Deacon on solemn pilgrimage to the dying Goronwy Rees before coming to see me. While living at Strand-on-the-Green I edited the Faber anthology on adventure and dedicated it to Christopher Knight and Ruth Armitage in the following terms, 'To Christopher, for adventures on the Blue Heron: To Ruth, for adventures up the garden path.'

But we were to experience far more extraordinary adventures after Anthony Blunt read the manuscript of the anthology and Christopher Knight read the various High Court claims drawn up by his old school friend, today's Lord Justice Neill. Intrigues at the wartime Ministry of Information had seemed as exciting to me as the scheming of Belfast's street gangs in the 1930s, but I equally enjoyed the devious manoeuvres of the 1960s spycatchers which are still unsolved, although after the abrupt collapse in 1991 of Communism in Russia, international politics can never be the same again. But looking over a garden wall to see how a neighbour's roses are doing is as natural as spying on an enemy through official keyholes.

One of Ruth Armitage's predecessors at Strand-on-the-Green House was Joe Miller, a Shakespearean actor born in 1684 and known for his book of JESTS, actually collected earlier by John Mottley, and giving rise to such phrases as 'That's a stale jest' or 'That's a jest from Mottley's book'. Anthony Blunt made a fool of himself over a more recent example of wit passed off as wisdom. 'Snooty and condescending. I didn't like him' was the verdict passed on Blunt by the historian eminent at both Oxford and Cambridge, Hugh Trevor Roper, Lord Dacre, who himself failed to see a stale jest when he authenticated the Hitler Diaries which turned out to be bogus.

Another don responded to Blunt's snooty condescension by writing a spoof ridiculing Blunt who, failing to recognise the jest, took it seriously and got a rare academic award for its author who was solemnly asked to set up a university course on the subject of his spoof. This jest certainly did not come from Mottley's book nor did the analysis of Blunt's relationship with Andrew Gow, classics don and Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, which caused more than university alarm when it appeared in the biography of Blunt, CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE. But both Blunt and Gow were dead by then, although I still have not dared to tell Gow's great-niece, Belinda Drake, which of our friends wrote the spoof Blunt fell for.

Cruel Sees

One of the books Elizabeth Nicholson brought to me at Strand-on-the-Green was **The Way That I Went: An Irishman in Ireland** by the family friend Robert Lloyd Praeger, inscribed with the bishop's unmistakable handwriting 'MacNeice, Bishop's House, Belfast 1937.' This journey through Ireland was made by members of the Belfast Field Club with 'S.A Stewart, trunk-maker, botanist and geologist; Wm. Swanston, linen manufacturer and geologist; F.J. Bigger, solicitor and archaeologist; Joseph Wright, grocer and specialist in the Foraminifera; Wm Gray, Inspector under the Office of Works, and in science jack-of-all-trades; Charles Bulla, commercial traveller and palaeontologist; S.M. Malcolmson, physician and microscopist; Robert Bell, shipyard worker and geologist...' Bishop and Mrs MacNeice enjoyed reading the Ireland journey more than about the Iceland one for in **Letters from Iceland** Louis and W.H. Auden describe travels with friends who could hardly be termed good companions since drink for them was no demon. I am certainly glad that Louis's unfinished autobiography **The Strings Are False** was only published after the author and his parents were dead. The parents would not have approved though for me the book brings out so many characteristics of the whole family as I knew them.

One day in 1964 Charles Monteith phoned me to say that a William McKinnon had come from Sweden to write a biography of the recently dead Louis, and could I arrange for McKinnon to meet those friends of Louis's that Monteith and other Faber staff had been introduced to at my home. So I invited a dozen or so people to lunch who I knew had influenced Louis's ideas and tastes at school, at Oxford and the BBC, as well as Louis's friends who went with him to the annual grand finale of rugby at Twickenham. Louis's constant companion for many years was Eric Ewens from Belfast who also shared my home 1961 to 65. Eric worked in the BBC with Louis and spent most lunchtimes and evenings with the poet in the George pub near their BBC office. Eric's parson father had, like Bishop MacNeice, run foul of the Orange Order in Belfast. Today Eric lives in the country working on his Proust translations while his actor brother-in-law Denys Hawthorne and I still return to Ulster to talk about MacNeice, the poet/producer who dominated the BBC drama department even though he was essentially a shy man, even when drunk. Eric called him 'The Snarler' because Louis was inclined to snarl out the side of his mouth. We all wore clothes which seemed practical and comfortable to us but 'casual' to other people and which contrasted with the

formal garb affected by Louis's two close school friends who arrived for my lunch party, Anthony Blunt and John Hilton, the latter complete with bowler hat as he had come direct from his desk at the Foreign Office.

John Hilton had found letters he wrote to his parents from the time he went to Marlborough school in 1921 until he left Oxford in 1929, and so he could add them to other brilliant recollections he had of a youthful Louis MacNeice. This excellent material surpassed anything that Blunt or I could produce and as Elizabeth Nicholson was not only editing Louis's unfinished autobiography but also liked John Hilton personally, it was agreed that to include a sizeable chunk of Hilton's letters would be an ideal way to complete **The Strings Are False**. Hilton's observation of the MacNeices in their habitat are better than anybody's. During a visit to Carrickfergus in 1928 when Louis's father was an archdeacon there, Hilton wrote, 'We dined with a Belfast aunt, lately engaged in gun-running... Mrs MacNeice threw Nietzsche downstairs this morning and the archdeacon said he was only fit to light candles with, but he is very broad, I should think, on the whole. He can put the weight further than Anthony or Louis and gave me several solemn warnings about the beautiful girls of Dublin.'

When Louis got engaged to the rich Mariette Ezra, Hilton wrote, 'Mariette's grandfather won't leave her any money if she marries a Christian, but the real present and pressing difficulty is Louis's people... They cannot stand the idea of a Jewess, they accuse Mariette's mother of setting traps... So the stage is setting for a tip top storm. Picture the opposition of the Archdeacon, broad, magnificent, pontifical, Irish, backed by all the weight and majesty of the church. Think of trying to explain things to the deaf Mrs MacNeice. The whole affair is too ludicrous for words. And not content with Mariette and his drunkenness, Louis seems to have chosen the moment, perhaps unavoidably, for revealing that he cannot really call himself a Christian.'

Roman Catholics regarded Louis's father as extremely broad himself compared with most Belfast clergy. Nevertheless the ancient suspicion of the Jews stalked him, not only because it was they who crucified Christ but, closer to home, because Belfast's poor were being bled in economic crucifixion at the Jewish 'tick-men's' hands. These money lenders charged enormous interest and the instalment collectors, the 'tick-men', were the dread of the working class life as I knew it. When my father died in 1933, thirty per cent of Belfast's workforce was unemployed and the proud shipyard of Harland and Wolff had no ship that year sliding down the slipway where the almighty Titanic had gone before. The poor grew angry and marched on the workhouse up the Lisburn Road for this was the last resort of the destitute. At least the situation revealed the truth about politics because Protestant workers marched

in solidarity with Catholic workers. They marched against their common enemies, the employers and the Poor Law Guardians who fixed the rate of Outdoor Relief. The Poor Law Guardians were actually in session arranging a new rate when 7,000 unemployed marched on the workhouse to demand a minimum of 15 shillings and 3 pence a week for a single man, even though it cost 16 shillings and 1 penny a week to keep the same person in the workhouse doing 'task work' while wearing the hated hoddie-grey uniform and obeying the prison-like rules.

The only alternative to spending the rest of one's life in the workhouse was to refuse Outdoor Relief and get work in England. This was my mother's constant fear after my father's accident. Had we been forced into the workhouse, we would have been separated from her in the children's wards. And many of the children never came out alive, since an average of over 460, under the age of fifteen years, died every year in Ulster workhouses before committal to paupers' graves. We all knew about the Lisburn Road workhouse since one of its oldest inhabitants was Miss Teresa Campbell, my mother's aunt. I wrote of her in **No Surrender**, 'She was a tall, eaten-away-looking woman in the grey workhouse uniform, with a disconnected imbecile emptiness about the face, framed by unloved brown hair. Once a month I went on an errand of mercy to see her, taking a quarter-pound of ginger snaps. She liked gingers, and received them with a puzzled, inquisitive, monkey expression. She was not bedridden like her neighbours, and was employed on small jobs, including the disposal of bed-pans. Dozens of old crones crammed the wards, all in various stages of blindness, insanity and decay, and all had interesting histories behind them.'

The rebellion at the workhouse broke out not because the unemployed marched on the main gate while thousands of others lay across the tram-lines stopping the traffic, but when the male inmates protested against porridge and demanded an egg with bread-and-butter for a change. When this was refused they in turn refused to go to bed at the regulation hour of 8pm and instead started singing and dancing together. The police were called in to throw godless dancers out of the Christian workhouse.

It was similarly my father's dancing and singing with Bob Harbinson on the Custom House steps that so outraged Hellfire Jack Bryans and the mission lawyer, William Fulton. When over 50,000 unemployed confronted Hellfire Jack and other lay preachers with the fact that it was 'work and wages' they wanted and not the coffee evenings and magic lantern shows of the mission halls, the government blamed outside influences. The official Unionist reply came in the press, 'It was a shame to see their own Protestant people being driven by hirelings from Dublin, Glasgow, and from Moscow.' Then another cry went up for a 'Rent-and-Tick strike' that sent shudders through

elements of Belfast's Jewish community who had fled with nothing from the Russian Revolution to make their fortune charging outrageous rates of interest on the rent-and-tick. The person who made this demand on the Custom House steps did not come from Moscow or Glasgow for Tommy Geehan was a local Catholic, member of the Revolutionary Workers' group and Unemployed Candidate in the Poor Law Guardians' elections.

Louis MacNeice was extremely proud of the role of peacemaker his father played in Belfast at this time, hence the salute to 'half his pride of blood' in **Letters from Iceland**. The original draft of the address Bishop MacNeice made to Catholics and Protestants on 7 July 1935 was the first of the family documents Louis gave me. Notwithstanding all this, Louis did marry his Oxford Jewess and after she went with a lover and their son Dan to the United States, Louis returned to spend his holidays at Bishop's House on the Malone Road. The family worshipped at the nearby St John's Church where the Rev J H Bloom was the curate, and who wrote to me on 18 February 1969, 'I am afraid I have little really for you, particularly for your purpose, as my memories of Bishop MacNeice are more personal - his humility and great kindness, leaving behind nothing but infinite affection for him. He came to St John's one Sunday evening, when I was first ordained, and inquired of the Rector how I was getting on. 'He preached for seventeen minutes this morning,' replied the Rector. 'This is very serious' said the Bishop, 'never do at all. You must never preach more than fifteen minutes'.

Louis did not accompany his father to St John's on Sunday but, as he says in **The Strings Are False**, he spent his time with 'George MacCann who had done surrealist work but thought most surrealists were phoney. I used to spend weekends in his cottage in Co. Armagh, drinking whiskey and exchanging our memories of the ludicrous, then sleeping on the floor by a turf fire. George's family had always lived in this district, so he took a clannish pride in its geography; every other hill was a link with some ancestor - several of which ancestors, as George described them, were rogues.'

Another painter who went to MacCann's home was Grace Hamilton. She wrote to me on 11 October 1987, 'I loved Louis MacNeice's poetry. When I was in my twenties, full of enthusiasm I wrote to the BBC saying I would like to read it over the air. So I did. This led to other readings. I met Louis MacNeice, at the flat of George and Mercy MacCann - he was rather hazy with alcohol - in fact if my memory serves me right he was lying down and hardly conscious.'

In the 1930s, Grace Hamilton's favourite dancing partner was the elegant Henry Lynch-Robinson, and when I returned in 1963 to write **Ulster**, he had become a busy but hardly the most talented architect in that Belfast milieu which, while still meeting at George MacCann's home, donned dinner-

jackets for Henry's large house on the Lisburn Road, especially if the **Surveyor** of the Queen's Pictures, Sir Anthony Blunt, or the Duchess of Westminster were expected there. Henry certainly never invited me, for he and I had crossed swords when I was aged fourteen.

When Forrest Reid picked up the schoolboy Kenneth Hamilton in a park a second boy was involved, Frank Campbell. Just as Reid asked Mrs Hamilton if she would mind her son visiting Reid's home, Reid asked the name of Mrs Campbell who often played bridge with the author. Knox Cunningham knew the Campbell family extremely well and later used that knowledge against me and still-living members of my family in Belfast when he ceased being Harold Macmillan's close associate and threw in his lot with the Rev Ian Paisley. It was particularly upsetting to my elderly mother and those of her family with whom she had grown up on the Ravenhill Road where in 1969 Paisley's vast new Martyrs Memorial Church opened its doors opposite the Ormeau golf course.

My mother took great pride in my writing, but I could not expect her relations at the Martyrs Memorial Church to do the same. With a whiff of idolatry this church not only contains busts of such noted Protestant martyrs as Wycliffe and Knox, Luther and Calvin but also, and this surprises outsiders ignorant of the inside story, a bust of my friend from 1944, Dennis Parry. My mother very carefully read the following before I sent it to the publisher, 'In this port of Belfast a master plying his own barque left one of his sixteen daughters to become Mary Campbell the cook general who sang alto with George Bell, bass and boiler-maker, and going to more than choir practice she brought forth Georgina into the world of gospel-belles. Though Mary came from the sea and knew the rigging as well as her Bible, the shipyard bark carried her off at the age of thirty, and on Good Friday afternoon the child Georgina watched as the backdoor was taken down to shroud the wasted Mary. So the cook-general never saw her twelve-year old daughter become a doffer at Barber's Mill spinning from six at morning to six at night for four shillings a week. Or that four years later Georgina went on the bell-can at the Rope Works and had her teeth, all, taken out by pliers at the scullery sink for false ones to tell a false tale of age, which meant work, women's work and pain, and so bread.'

It was Mary Campbell's sister, Catherine Devine, who, not from need of money but because my mother was born out of wedlock, sent the godless bastard out to work at the age of twelve. Similar malice generated by her evangelical conscience prompted her to condemn her sister Teresa to a lifetime in the Lisburn Road workhouse. When my mother became a widow and she spent all day out working or long periods in hospital, we three children had to be sent somewhere, though certainly not to my father's friends the

Harbinsons whose drinking habits Great-aunt Catherine blamed for my father's downfall. There always had to be a victim in evangelical eyes and at that moment the Harbinsons chanced to be the object of hatred among those preaching that 'God is Love.'

So off I went to stay with my mother's brother Bob, a great favourite until the day when some kilted pipers were getting ready in the parlour for a parade and Catherine came in just as one was teaching me to recite, 'There was a great big kiltie who lived in Mullingar, and every time the wind blew up his kilt, you saw his big cigar.' It puzzled me why my mother's maiden name had been Georgina Bell while her brother was Bob Campbell. When I dared to ask Great-aunt Catherine between her Bible readings to explain this, she flew into a rage and accused me of being as bad as the Harbinsons, a jolly family I liked as much as I disliked Mrs Samuel Devine, as I made clear in **No Surrender**.

To reach the Devine home on the Ravenhill Road we made a detour so that we could play in Ormeau Park which Forrest Reid described, 'There was the beauty of an autumn afternoon in the Ormeau Park at dusk, when, with the dead leaves thick on the deserted paths, I had sat listening to a German band playing somewhere out of sight...' Like so many others, Ormeau Park always attracted young and not-so-young men like Forrest Reid who wanted to talk to children but unlike Reid without asking their parents' leave. As I pointed out in **No Surrender** I was fully aware of the homosexual world by the age of ten, and in Ormeau Park I had an experience which luckily for me ended the purgatory of staying with Catherine Devine. The distinguished gentleman in Ormeau Park did not bait me with the usual 'sweetie bag' but a camera. He wanted me to pose for him on the swings and climb trees, which I was not afraid to do since there were plenty of people in the park who knew me. When I described the old man later to Great-aunt Catherine she attacked me wildly with her blackthorn stick.

After my mother came out of hospital, she also felt none too pleased to tell me that while Catherine's husband, Samuel Devine, the respected preacher of the Templemore Avenue Mission, was away in the navy during the First World War, his wife Catherine had had an affair with a well-known Jewish rent-and-ticker. Even more scandalously, that same gentleman also turned out to have been the seducer of Catherine's elder sister, my grandmother Mary who bore his child. But the rent-and-ticker would not allow the boy to have his name, so my Uncle Bob was called Campbell after his mother. These Byzantine relationships got another twist later when Knox Cunningham announced that, contrary to what everybody believed, George Bell, who had been in the pay of the Ormeau rent-and-ticker, was not my mother's real father, the Jewish rent-and-ticker being accredited with her birth as well as

her brother Bob's.

By that time, 1969, the Martyrs Memorial Church had more urgent things to think about because two of its leading lights, Ian Paisley and John McKeague, had severed their close religious and political association when McKeague's boyfriend went to prison and the daring bomber McKeague broke down and confessed all, or nearly all his homosexual doings to Paisley. Their subsequent rivalry, before the IRA finally succeeded in murdering McKeague, was aired in their respective newspapers, of which Paisley's Protestant Telegraph regularly carried writings by Knox Cunningham. Little wonder some months later my mother left her family on the Ravenhill Road for the last time to make her home in England just as in 1925 she had left Catherine Devine's house, escaping through marriage to the warm and carefree ways of my wild father and the unsaved Harbinsons. By then my father already had the reputation of drunkard and that seemed to my mother an ideal antidote to the poison of hatred and secrecy on the Ravenhill Road, in Ormeau Park and the mission halls.

Uncle Bob not only liked pipe bands but also his garden where he specialised in exotic chrysanthemums. His own back garden, however, could not accommodate his horticultural ambitions so he spent his weekend, and even the Sabbath morning itself, at a large, detached house off the Malone Road which boasted several glasshouses and potting sheds. This belonged to an elderly widower, Hugh Campbell, a cousin who sported no photographs of his late wife in the many frames dotted about the public rooms. But there were many snaps of Uncle Bob and his piper friends in their kilts. While a customs officer in China, Hugh had collected oriental porcelain which crammed his house. In **No Surrender** I wrote, 'His strongest influence in my life began when I was fourteen and had come back from the country to begin work in the shipyard. But in the earliest days of our relationship, he played the important half, always pressing gifts on me. I treasured those oriental oddments, imagining them to be of tremendous value. He presented me with two huge coloured photographs taken during his travels in the East. The 'great Gate of Nikko' with its fearsome dragon masks and hanging bells, and the deep, twisted roof thick with carying underneath, wakened a strong desire in me. I wanted to go and see these things in reality... So in this way I discovered early my obsession for travelling, though it had to wait years for fulfilment.'

If the poorest of the sixteen Campbell sisters, Teresa, had been sent to the workhouse as a young girl, at the other and grander end of the Lisburn Road lived another of my great-aunts, Mrs Rebecca Browne. When Uncle Bob died in 1942, with a solemn wink of her knowing eye, Great-aunt Rebecca told my mother I should be encouraged 'to keep in with Uncle Hughie as he might leave the house' to me. The fact that Henry Lynch-

Robinson and other well-known homosexuals went to 'Uncle' Hughie's house did not appear to disturb Great-aunt Rebecca who despised her own semi-detached Victorian villa and aspired to a bigger one in London for her only daughter who in fact still lives there today. Rebecca's ambitions seemed modest compared with the seventy wooded acres of Glencairn Park, the Belfast home of Knox Cunningham, although even he got pipped at the post in the Grand Mastership stakes as Hellfire Jack Bryans romped home.

For some years Henry Lynch-Robinson's parents lived modestly in Belfast's Windsor Avenue, close to Great-aunt Rebecca and 'Uncle' Hughie. Both Rebecca's and Mrs Lynch-Robinson's mothers hailed from County Donegall while it still formed part of the ancient province of Ulster and before the 'Rt Hon Sir Henry Augustus Robinson' sat as Commissioner of Municipal Boundaries for the whole of Ireland. At the dividing up of the province in 1922, Sir Henry's son Adrian became Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs and father of the architect Henry Lynch-Robinson who so disliked me because he was aware I knew a secret about his family, revelation of which would have seriously damaged their standing in Belfast. For his part, Henry knew perfectly well that the Campbell family, in which Great-aunt Rebecca took such pride, had other irregularities of birth apart from the question over the parentage of my mother and her brother. So it was in both Henry's and my family's interests not to talk about who had who when Samuel Devine went off to join the Royal Navy in the First World War. When the homosexual brethren of Ian Paisley's Martyrs' Church broke ranks and took to bombing, Knox Cunningham would tell all.

Two other young men who also knew the Chinese porcelain in Hughie Campbell's house as well as the framed diplomas in Mrs Lynch-Robinson's front parlour, had become leading civil servants and broadcasters thirty years later and as each book of mine came out they broadcast reviews of it for the BBC. Yet even all their efforts could not reconcile me with Henry Lynch-Robinson. In *Ulster* I tell how the President of the Society of Ulster Architects, Robert McKinsty, invited me in 1962 to address their annual meeting on the work of the Brazilian genius Oscar Niemeyer. McKinsty had started his practice with Henry Lynch-Robinson but to the delight of our mutual friends Anthony Blunt and Peter Montgomery the partnership folded up.

In *The Strings Are False*, MacNeice wrote of the soldiers' local camp at Carrickfergus, their Sunday attendance at his father's church, 'and all day we could hear the sentry challenging.' One of the officers, Col Gordon McClellan, had an only son, Patrick, who always remembered his early life at Carrickfergus camp and Archdeacon MacNeice's church. But whereas Louis MacNeice went off to Marlborough School with Anthony Blunt,

Patrick McClellan was sent to Shrewsbury with Patrick Carey whose English father had founded Mourne Grange, an Ulster prep school. Young Carey duly returned to Mourne Grange as its headmaster, while McClellan began a lifelong operatic career which took him back to Belfast over the years, beginning in 1936 with the Universal Grand Opera Company, and ending in 1979 with the North of Ireland Opera Trust's production of Verdi's *Macbeth*, for which Henry Lynch-Robinson designed the sets in a final occasion for both men. Lynch-Robinson had been a pupil at Mourne Grange and in the 1930s with Patrick Carey, delighted in the kilted pipers at my 'Uncle' Hughie Campbell's house.

Writing about Irish opera in *Tribune* on 4 December 1983, Deidre Purcell noted, 'One of the first into the room was the Stage Director, Patrick McClellan, a marvellous sight in full kilt and regalia, dirk stuck in a knee sock, sporran slung low. He comes over from the Isle of Man for every season. No one has ever seen him dressed otherwise.'

The Isle of Man figured in both our wartime and peacetime activities. Ironically, Patrick's beautiful island home, Westham, had been built by one of the officers guarding Napoleon on that other island, St Helena. In 1939, Patrick's father had raised the Manx Regiment much to the satisfaction of his friend, Earl Granville, the Governor of the island who loved going to Westham. But the prisoners of war on Man did not interest Anthony Blunt so much as the fact that his cousin Rose was the governor's wife, although only when the Granvilles went to Government House in Northern Ireland could that Russian spy Blunt indulge his homosexual and royal interests.

A need for grand connections was felt even in the modest Forrest Reid, the supposed misogynist who had the Hamilton sisters to his council house and boasted that he was related to Katherine Parr, the 'last and most fortunate of the wives of Henry VIII' as he wrote in *Apostate*. Even his beloved sailor, Kenneth Hamilton, could claim connection with the Empress Eugenie. Not to be left out of such pretensions was Henry Lynch-Robinson who, after the war, found he had ties with Lord Mountbatten. However, that such a maligned sailor had certainly not the links with me that others have wrongly ascribed to us without troubling to research the newspaper reports of law cases and unpublished papers in Church hands as well as those I inherited as Adeline de la Feld's executor.

Governors came and went to Northern Ireland leaving the political and religious divide as deep as ever. Blunt's old friends, Captain Peter Montgomery and the then future Duke of Westminster, certainly featured in a minor way as ADCs to the governor, but were secondary to Commander Oscar Henderson who acted both as Controller and Private Secretary to the governors between 1923 and 1947. I knew his two sons, William and Hugh in relation to their

television and newspaper interests which produced detailed features dealing with my life and books for over thirty years. As a barrister, Hugh wrote to me on 5 April 1976, 'Please find enclosed a Notice that Messrs. Hugh Larratt Henderson and Reginald John Nation are applying for a grant of Letters Probate, together with a copy of the Will and Codicil of the late Countess de la Feld. This is a notice we are required by statute to send to all beneficiaries interested in an estate.' I was mainly concerned about Adeline's huge pile of letters and family papers which I began to bring to England from Canada in 1949. Without them this story could not have been told unless I followed Mr Ken Livingstone's example and just threw dice about who was having who.

1938 saw Patrick McClellan in Belfast again for his first appearance there with the International Grand Opera Company, while the newly-elected Edmond Warnock MP came to see Canon Maguire's production of *The Fourth Wise Man* at St Simon's in which I played a Roman slave girl. I would take part in more than guards-of-honour for Edmond Warnock who by 1944 was Minister of Home Affairs at Stormont where Henry Lynch-Robinson's father, Adrian, was the Permanent Secretary. Henry and I both realised that had we blurted out the truth, his father would have been far from 'permanent'. Although only a ten-year old in the Church Lads Brigade guard of honour for Warnock, I was wise enough to hold my tongue.

However, those ten years qualified me for membership of Warnock's Orange Order where he was not overpleased when my cousin, Hellfire Jack Bryans, eventually eclipsed him as the Imperial Grand Master. The Orange Lodge chosen for me by Hellfire Jack was Sons of William No. 34 which met in Sandy Row. The parades seemed futile to me except for the away ones when we went by train and personally saw that our kilted pipers were not cissies wearing trews under their kilts. But I enjoyed the Orange concerts where the combination of my acquired Malone accent and my singing voice brought some prizes my way which meant that I and my street-corner friends stole less. When years later the singer Sylvia Gordon told Canon Maguire that she had been reading about him in my books, like the rector she too realised that it was something of a miracle that I had outgrown my boyhood tuberculosis, avoided being doomed like Great-aunt Teresa to the workhouse and, unlike so many of my street-corner friends, had never been sent to borstal.

In her letter to me Sylvia Gordon recalled that Canon Maguire was 'that dear old soul who has bullied his way into a goodly number of hearts.' And this is what she read in *No Surrender*, 'But the rector was more than generous in filling our cornucopia. He was a man with a huge voice that sought out every crack and corner of the church. Not much liked by my own family, he saved me, not from the "wrath to come", but on endless occasions from

approved schools; and I shall probably never reckon fully how much my life owed to him. From his house every Saturday morning, I collected the orphan money. But I remember him best on Christmas Eve when I had to go to the rectory for a joint provided by the parish poor-box. His wife handed me a parcel and off I went. But I did not get very far before the rector came bawling after me. What was the good, he demanded, of that skinny piece of meat for four people, and made me go back for a heftier piece. His parish was vast, but by a kind of sixth sense, the rector knew the needs of everyone.'

Bishop MacNeice well described Charles Maguire as 'a man of marked ability' but he was also a tough character, and he thought some toughening-up in the boxing-ring would do me good, first in the Church Lads Brigade and afterwards at the YMCA. For many men it is a short step from muscular Christianity to overt homosexuality and for the 'tough' extreme Protestant Knox Cunningham it was no step at all. If Knox suffered disappointment over his failure to become Grand Master of the Orange Order, he found consolation and pride in his chairmanship not only of the National Council of the YMCA for the whole of Ireland but also for England and Wales.

At the 12 July celebrations each year the delight he experienced in whacking his Lambeg Drum until his wrists bled matched Knox's pleasure at getting into the ring to show young Protestants how to give a bloody nose. He never allowed anyone to forget his prowess at Cambridge and I heard a young man proclaim triumphantly as he straddled the enormous bulk of Cunningham, 'I've got the Heavy Weight Champion of Cambridge University between my legs'. In these simple, hearty matters Knox Cunningham applied the old-fashioned sense of 'fair play' to his dealings with the young boxers at the various YMCAs. Once we not only helped ourselves to the silver change from his pockets in the cloakroom but actually hid the trousers. His barrister's training did not fail him. Instead of calling for vengeance he astonished us by announcing 'A half-crown to the boy who finds my trousers'. They were soon found. Equally simple and hearty but also excessively offensive was the remark he made and which the world press reported, when the twenty-one year old student, Bernadette Devlin, entered the House of Commons in 1969 as MP for Mid-Ulster. She had won the election by fighting for 'One Man One Vote' for Northern Ireland's second-class citizens. Knox Cunningham liked her rather less than his YMCA boxers and in one of his more-printable attacks, dismissed her as 'a mere slip of a girl.'

From 1969 to 1977 I spent the week in Sussex and weekends at Strand-on-the-Green with Ruth Armitage. My Sussex neighbour was Michael Topping and when he went away working on films I took his great-dane Fags with my own labrador Caspar for long walks over the Downs. Michael's father, William Topping, the Recorder of Belfast, had previously been

Minister of Home Affairs there and was not only socially and politically close to the hypocritical Knox Cunningham but, like him, a sitting duck for the IRA. Sure enough the Sussex police soon came to tell Michael Topping that the IRA had bombed his parents' home. But Michael was away and so I had my first interview with Sir George Terry's police, not about Kincora Boys' Home, but about Judge Topping who never tried John McKeague's early homosexual crimes with YMCA boys for the simple reason that Sir Knox Cunningham QC, MP could not afford scandals in his temples to Pan. It hardly surprised me to see the Sussex Police as I wrote to the Director of Public Prosecutions later. The Catholic community had long complained that for similar offences such a prominent Orangeman as the Recorder of Belfast passed heavier sentences on them than on Protestants.

For twenty years I was a literary critic on the Dublin-based Irish Press owned by the De Valera family, and 'Old Dev', at that time 1972, ended his long and often stormy career as the President of the Republic of Ireland. Naturally I took a different view in my writing from Knox Cunningham in Paisley's Protestant Telegraph. Harold Macmillan had retired to his Sussex estate, and his former PPS, Knox Cunningham was not the only Irish person we both knew.

In 1960 Macmillan successfully contested the election for the chancellorship of Oxford University when his rival was aided and abetted by Sir Maurice Bowra, Warden of Wadham College who wrote and published anonymously an attack on Macmillan's private life which I discussed several times with the then Prime Minister. This attack never reached the law courts and the international press, but another matter did in 1960. It concerned an Irish friend of both Macmillan and myself and it involved Macmillan's nephew, the present Duke of Devonshire who was called as a witness in court. Out of office, and without his red boxes 'Mac' suffered loneliness and depression, feelings which intensified after his wife's death. But the ringing of the telephone at Birch Grove House seemed to jolt him out of the dumps and once begun he went on talking to me miles away in Rottingdean, the village where the father of his wife's love-child, Robert Boothby, had gone to school and where Boothby often returned with or without Lady Dorothy Macmillan.

Macmillan had a particular fondness for Eileen O'Casey, the playwright's widow, who at one stage seemed to appear as his hostess. But although born in a Dublin slum Sean O'Casey's name, like mine, appeared on the roll of the Church of Ireland's Protestant Orphans' Society. Former poverty rather than present circumstances motivated much of Sean O'Casey's work which, in six volumes published by his friend Harold Macmillan, took to task other Irish authors who gave themselves airs and graces. Knox Cunningham certainly

gave himself so many Orange airs that I wondered why such a close friend as Harold Macmillan had failed to publish Knox's one volume of memoirs.

The Labour Leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords from 1970 to 74 was Lord Shackleton, who also spoke in parliament on Ulster affairs since besides being the son of the Southern Irish born explorer, Sir Ernest Shackleton, he had been a BBC producer in Belfast in the 1930s when I was going around with my pin-hole card for the Protestant Orphans' Society. The fact that Tory as well as Labour governments asked Eddie Shackleton to update anti-terrorist legislation is proof of his impartiality and his skill at arbitrating in disputes when the law courts fail to settle grievances, since of course, judges sit to administer codes, ancient and modern, whereas somebody such as Shackleton can often use judgement of another sort when he knows both sides well, as he does the Ulster question. The voluminous correspondence between Shackleton and me over the years, when we were not in daily telephone contact, or he was not staying with me in Sussex, is proof of his patience in dealing with me on the one hand and Knox Cunningham's trouble-makers in Belfast on the other. While Shackleton produced for the BBC in Belfast, Peter Montgomery was conducting its orchestra. He so admired Shackleton's fairmindedness that when Shackleton made a speech in the Lords about financing the arts in 1964 both Anthony Blunt and I impressed on Peter Montgomery that he should use the speech by this government minister as a basis for his own debut on television as the President of the Arts Council, which he did.

Since my entry into the spy books came after the **Sunday Times** reporters found my name and Blunt's at Peter Montgomery's home in Co Tryone, I knew that if the spy-catching authors were going to do their homework properly they would need to know how Cunningham's world overlapped with Blunt and Montgomery at Cambridge as well as Northern Ireland. So I wrote to Macmillan on 19 January 1986, 'I have been interviewed on a number of occasions by two authors about a forthcoming biography of the late Anthony Blunt. I am making available to them documents and taped conversations I have had over the years to and from Cabinet Ministers and their PPSs. The PPS most involved is, of course, your own, the late Knox Cunningham. Despite his long friendship with a number of publishers, apart from yourself, no one was prepared to publish Knox's autobiography and posterity will have to read about him in books about E M Forster and Forrest Reid. E M Forster was the Cambridge friend who so influenced Anthony Blunt, Peter Montgomery and Guy Burgess on the question of loyalty.

'Before I went to interview E M Forster about his 36 years of friendship with Reid, Knox rang me several times from Admiralty House (where you were temporarily housed) to confirm points, such as Forster writing in **Two**

Cheers For Democracy that Reid "was the most important man in Belfast." Knox did however put me wise about the row between himself and E M Forster, and warned me not to mention your PPS on my visits to Cambridge/Oxford. Apart from Forster and Reid there were many other Oxbridge friends who appeared in my book and so not to "get my wires crossed" I had all relevant passages vetted by Knox and Anthony Blunt - who was himself at that time consulting me regularly about an art book by one of our other mutual friends, Tomas Harris.

Knox was so delighted with my writing about so many of his friends that he, and a number of other MPs came to parties hosted by the Northern Ireland government. One press report stated, "Mr Robin Bryans is a brilliant author who also possesses the gift of the diplomat," for not only had I got Sir Knox-to-Hell-with-the-Pope Cunningham talking to an old enemy Sir Alec Randall, former Minister to the Holy See, but also Cahir Healy, the Nationalist MP, twice imprisoned, to be photographed with the Unionist chairman and myself in a Tory newspaper. No small achievement.

By this time Anthony Blunt had made his confession and a Tory administration granted him immunity. Since Blunt had helped me and my old, still-living Harris friends with books, I naturally wanted Sir Francis Evans, the Ulster Agent in London, to invite Blunt to the reception. Blunt refused to come, as did his old Cambridge friend, Peter Montgomery (then President of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland). Knox assured me that the difference that had arisen between himself and E M Forster at Cambridge had nothing to do with Blunt's new troubles which I was fully aware of.....

Knox was even better acquainted with the family of another Tory Home Secretary, whose trustee he was at the time I spoke with you on the question of loyalty at Oxford and Cambridge. You may recall how outraged I was about the "dirty tricks" Maurice Bowra used in opposing your Chancellorship at Oxford. You said you took it all as part of a game, and I presume you do not mind if I allow the Blunt biographers access to your and your PPS's records. I am only slightly worried by the fact that your firm did not think Knox's own memoirs worth publishing. Was this because it was pre-Blunt confession and Knox was so deeply involved with the Oxbridge circle written about in my own book and elsewhere?

By 1986 Harold Macmillan had become both 92 years old and the Earl of Stockton. Although he had not been afraid to upbraid Prime Minister Thatcher who had ennobled him, in his disgust at the selling of the national assets, which he colourfully put as 'selling the family silver,' nevertheless 'Supermac's' great days were over. So blind that his secretary had to read my letter to him, he remained the old Mac nonetheless, courteous and lively-minded to the end. After apologies about his health, he added, 'As regards

Knox's memoirs I have a feeling that if Macmillan refused to publish the book it was because they thought it would not be successful. About all the various complications I knew little at the time. I was fond of Knox because he seemed an upright and sincere man and was very painstaking.'

I am convinced Macmillan spoke the truth in saying he knew 'little at the time' of the Blunt/Cunningham complications, because Mac and I had a closer friend in the Roman Catholic priest, Ronnie Knox. During his last illness Ronnie Knox came up from Somerset to see the Queen's doctor and to stay at 10 Downing Street with Prime Minister Macmillan whom he had known since going up from Eton to Oxford. The nature of their relationship has been examined by Knox's biographer and fellow-convert to the Catholic church, Evelyn Waugh. In the same way that Macmillan dismissed the Oxford Chancellorship 'dirty tricks,' by Evelyn Waugh's other Oxford friend, Maurice Bowra, so Mac did not rush into court for injunctions about his early friendships. His tolerance could also be seen by the fact that he had in his house at the same time one of the most famous priests, Ronnie Knox, while one of the most outrageous Protestant militants, Knox Cunningham, was running Mac's parliamentary office. I had a similar experience when I brought the same Knox Cunningham face to face with Ronnie Knox's close friend, Sir Alec Randall, former minister and authority on the Vatican, over my book **Ulster** in which I stated, 'To my special joy, I discovered that old bitternesses are waning and that the beauty of Ulster is no longer scarred by old terrors.' That seemed like a leaf from a fairy story five years later when Knox Cunningham was a regular contributor to Paisley's **Protestant Telegraph**, and a subject of discussion when the Sussex Police came to see me about the scandals and their cover-up in the province.

By 1987 when Captain Colin Wallace and Major Fred Holroyd interviewed me at my home in Ealing about the Kincora Boys Home, Macmillan's grandson had succeeded him as Earl of Stockton and head of the publishing firm. The new earl was as intrepid as Mac, and went on record as saying he did not mind if his promotion prospects in the Tory ranks suffered because he dared to publish Paul Foot's exposure of corruption in the book **Who Framed Colin Wallace**.

Colin Wallace did not surprise me when he told me that as long ago as 8 November 1974 he made a memorandum about Tara Orange Lodge which Hellfire Jack Bryans had helped to inaugurate and about the fact that Knox Cunningham knew of the sexual abuse taking place at the Kincora Boys Home. But it distressed me to hear and later to read in **Who Framed Colin Wallace** about Brian McDermott, a ten year old boy murdered in 1973. The 1974 reports say, 'Reference R which deals with the circumstances surrounding the murder of BRIAN McDERMOTT last year puts forward the theory that

the killing had both sexual and witchcraft overtones. The only link can be identified between the murder and homosexual community is via JOHN McKEAGUE. McKEAGUE's own statements raise more questions than they answer. Certainly, his boast that he will not be prosecuted because "he knows too much about some people" merits serious investigation but I suspect that he will no (sic) be prepared to talk until he is released. (McKeague had been arrested and detained in 1973.) It is also rather remarkable that no charges have been preferred against him, at least during the past 3-4 years. Our own investigation of instances of alleged witchcraft or other satanic rites in the Province would tend to dismiss the RUC's theory that BRIAN McDERMOTT's murder could be part of these activities. In the past, "Black Magic" practices etc have been mainly confined to groups operating from Republican areas, with the possible exception of three cases in Co Antrim.'

Ian Paisley's biographers Ed Moloney and Andy Pollak noted, 'The latter was John McKeague, a fierce anti-Catholic bigot from Bushmills, County Antrim who had been converted to Free Presbyterianism in 1966. A greying 38-year-old, McKeague moved with his mother to East Belfast in 1968...McKeague had a dark secret which was ultimately to prove embarrassing for Paisley. He was a paederast and before he had moved to Belfast, the RUC had questioned him about assaults on two young boys; only the intervention of influential friends saved him from being charged. In the early 1970s he founded a Loyalist paramilitary group, the Red Hand Commandos, which consisted largely of young teenagers. McKeague himself was rarely seen in public without a youthful male escort.'

John McKeague had been saved and became a pillar of Paisley's Martyrs' Memorial Church with its bust of my wartime friend, Dennis Parry, until one of McKeague's boyfriends went to prison and Paisley distanced himself. But even as a saved pillar John McKeague kept up his interest in the black mass. Knox Cunningham's friend Charles Monteith had published my book *The Protege* in 1963 and it was not the part dealing with the strange behaviour of Dennis Parry going to prison as a conscientious objector in the war that McKeague wanted to learn more about. It was the man who wanted to return Dennis Parry to prison in 1944 that obsessed McKeague who thought himself something of a poet, and therefore eager to learn more about the Playboy Poet, Evan Morgan, the second Viscount Tredegar. McKeague's literary laurels were unique in as much as being the sole person to be prosecuted under the Incitement to Hatred Act for publishing an Orangeman's songbook, which contained a ballad, 'You've never seen a better Taig than with a bullet in his back.'

Ironically, McKeague's idol, Evan Tredegar was internationally known for his conversion to Roman Catholicism, and therefore a 'Taig' as well as

being the high priest of the black mass. In *A Silver-Plated Spoon* the Duke of Bedford tells of a visit he made to Tredegar Park in South Wales just before the war. This was only a few years before Ian Paisley and I went as students to the South Wales Bible College where we met our friend Dennis Parry who had just come out of prison as a fledgling martyr. Indeed, because of his allegations about Lord Tredegar and other black mass worshippers, many thought, including Tredegar, that poor Dennis deserved a longer sentence in Cardiff Prison.

The Duke of Bedford writes, 'The most extraordinary house I have ever stayed at, one that would certainly not have been approved of by my grandfather, belonged to Lord Tredegar, down in South Wales. He was a papal count of some sort and lived surrounded by Great Danes and handsome men-servants. I was taken there, I add hastily, by Lady Cunard. He really was an extraordinary fellow, with altars all over the house and a somewhat terrifying interest in black magic. He told somebody's fortune one night in his bedroom. There were three or four of us sitting in front of a huge fire, with the flames flickering on the four-poster bed. There was an owl flying around the room, and our host had put on some clothes which were supposed to have belonged to some witch in the past, and was holding up the skeleton of a witch's hand. While he was telling this fortune the temperature of the room fell so much that I was absolutely freezing in front of this enormous fire. It was one of the most eerie experiences I have ever had. It was a most odd establishment. Leaping all round the park there were kangaroos and things...'

Another still-living author who has written of Evan Tredegar's strange life-style is Daphne Fielding who records, 'His familiar was a malicious macaw, which terrified his friends and once pecked a black pearl ear-ring off an unsuspecting lady and dropped it in the fire. He himself was *Capa y Spada* to the Pope and, when attending the Holy Father, wore a romantic uniform with a plumed hat. He was also immensely rich.'

Evan Tredegar loved giving presents, whether to his handsome men-servants or members of the royal family. When he found out that my mother had been born in July, he quickly dispatched her a ruby ring which she wore until she died forty years later in 1986. This ring hypnotised John McKeague for he knew Evan Tredegar believed rings possessed mystical qualities. Tredegar apart, McKeague also asked my mother about other people in *The Protege* who knew Dennis Parry, Ian Paisley and me in South Wales during the war. Knox Cunningham, however, always liked to appear as the great Queen's Counsel who knew more than anybody about everybody, especially those in my books and bed. Cunningham, however, did not know the South Wales Bible College students at the time they met in the Second World War, and only when the civil war started did my particular friend, the Rev Paul

Tucker, follow Ian Paisley to Ulster to lead the Baptist training while John McKeague's Red Hand Commandos left their Bibles at home and took guns to the streets.

John McKeague adored his mother and when he had a dispute with the Ulster Defence Association over money, the feud within the Protestant ranks resulted in his home being petrol-bombed and his adored mother killed. Already a violent man, this tragedy and the bitterness over Paisley's failure to support him after the boyfriend went to prison, turned McKeague into an angry man as well and he founded the Red Hand Commandos which claimed the first sectarian murders in 1971. All Knox Cunningham's skills as a barrister in London's Temple chambers were sorely tested by the civil war in Northern Ireland, not only against the common foe, Catholics, but also against those born-again Protestants who did not limit their attacks on each other to newspaper articles.

My Ealing neighbour who knew Knox Cunningham and me is Norman Bridges, the right-hand man to Sir Francis Evans at the Ulster Office when my book *Ulster* was launched in 1964. Norman had a wife and young family, as did his rugby friend, John Hicks, the son of wealthy parents. His mother, Mrs Muriel Hicks, and her sister Freda, both converts to Catholicism like Lord Tredegar, supported the Benedictine Abbey at Ealing which Cardinal Vaughan founded to train singers for his new Westminster Cathedral.

On 31 March 1945 Evelyn Waugh wrote in his diary, 'I saw the Archbishop of Westminster, shrewd, vain, common, not humourless. I went there after drinking a bottle of champagne with Basil, rather tipsy...anyway he is to take his Easter Luncheon with us.' Waugh's friend Lord Tredegar could cope better with 'common' people whether they were archbishops or charwomen like my mother. Evan was one of the last generation wealthy enough to leave vast sums to the Catholic Church, as he did to Buckfast Abbey. Certainly there were not many of them around to ensure that the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster had more than his Easter luncheon to live on. However, now the two rich sisters, Mrs Hicks and Freda, stepped into the breach.

In 1952 I gave my younger sister away in marriage to John Hicks. It was a stylish, top-hat affair with my other sister's little sons in silk as page-boys. Sitting next to Muriel Hicks at the lavish reception I rummaged for polite conversation with the stately matron which turned to Irish books. Did I like Oliver St John Gogarty, she asked. Well, yes I did, and particularly his memoirs *As I was Going Down Sackville Street*. I thought it gave such a graphic description of Evan Tredegar exorcising the ghost of a young idiot boy at the home of my friends the Blakes in West Ireland, and Mrs Hicks very grandly told me she had known Lord Tredegar who died in 1949. Since we

sat at the head table with the bridal pair, she called out to her sister Freda, 'Come higher friend' and Freda joined us and told me how she lived in Rome for many years because her husband had been a diplomat there and how Evan Tredegar had visited them regularly. I already knew that Evan not only loved to dress and look like Percy Bysshe Shelley but quite seriously believed that he possessed the poet's soul. When visiting Rome, apart from doing his duties in a plumed hat as Privy Chamberlain of Cape and Sword to the Pope, he invariably popped into the Protestant Cemetery to do a spot of black mass over Shelley's grave.

Mrs Hicks and her Roman sister Freda also knew Sir Alec Randall, the British Minister to the Holy See and Hugh Montgomery, the first secretary. On 29 December 1964 Hugh Montgomery, by that time himself a papal chamberlain, wrote to me, 'Carissimo Roberto, I was so interested to read "The Protege". What a strange eventful life yours has been so far and how tame it makes my own youth seem, you were close to the realities of life from the beginning....There could hardly be a greater contrast imaginable than that between the only two of your *dramatis personae* whom I happen to have known personally, Bishop James McManaway and Evan Tredegar. I was christened by the former on what he did not know to be the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady sixty-nine-years ago this month...I too find it hard to imagine him at an earlier stage in his life being too familiar with the girls!

'Yes, indeed, what a different character was the exotic Evan! I remember him first at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1914, before I was pushed into the Army, to fight in the last of the imperialist wars. I remember him, clad in vestments and swinging a thurible, entering my room, accompanied by other bizarre figures, exactly on what errand I do not know. Someone said at that time I'd have made a good medium and wanted to cast me for that role but it may not have been Evan. I used to see him sometimes in the years between the wars. I remember once he told me how embarrassed he had been when Cardinal Gasquet, whose Mass he was about to serve, offered to hear his confession. As you probably know, he did actually get as far as entering the Beda College to study for the priesthood, but I think he only survived a few weeks....I think he was not all bad at heart and that *malgre tout* his religion meant very much to him. I had forgotten that his mother was "bonkers" (to use Hogg's vulgar expression.) I could not help wondering about the identity of the sinister but crazy Frank. I have various old Radleian friends who I suppose must know about him, at least by repute.'

Frank was one of three brothers called Mills, all clergymen in Anglican orders, and much concerned with occult groups I belonged to over the years. When Lord Alfred Douglas libelled Winston Churchill, the Rev James Mills

stood bail for him until the trial. After Bosie's release from prison he went to stay with James's brother, the Rev Frank Mills at Morecombe Manor near Bath where, with neither accuracy nor grace, he started writing about his life with Oscar Wilde. All this proved too much for Evan Tredegar. Frank Mills was one clergyman he could not tolerate, but that Bosie should choose to stay with Mills when he, Evan, was dying to become Bosie's protector added not just insult, but real hurt to the injury.

Frank Mills had entered Radley College in 1901 and followed Evan not only to Christ Church, Oxford, but also in pursuit of the poet Shelley's soul. The Mills brothers came from a wealthy Sussex family, just like Sir Timothy Shelley, the 2nd Baronet, and father of the poet, Percy Bysshe. In 1898 Sir John Shelley married the sole heiress of Evan's neighbour, Lord Llangattock, and as part of their vast inheritance changed the name to Shelley-Rolls. Evan grew up with the poet's descendants who lived at the celebrated house called The Hendre, Monmouth, Evan's own county.

Frank Mills went further than Evan in pursuit of Shelley's soul, and although he was a habitual masochist at Radley and Oxford who liked to be whipped, Frank felt the best way of getting close to the poet was to father the poet's heirs, so on 23 February 1913 he married Gwendolen Evelyn Shelley and later changed his name to that of his sons, Shelley-Mills. Secure with having sired some of the poet's direct descendants, Frank got divorced and returned to live in London so that he could study medicine and work with his friend Kenneth Walker. Although Walker was Hunterian Professor at the Royal College of Surgeons and had a popular following for his books such as **The Physiology of Sex**, and **Sex and Society**, his international fame came with his books about Gurdjieff and P D Ouspensky. Frank Shelley-Mills delighted to research Walker's books and wine and dine Ouspensky students such as myself.

In his remarkable biography of T S Eliot, Peter Ackroyd writes of the poet, 'He had already been introduced to the Tarot pack - despite Eliot's animadversions on the subject, "psychic phenomena" held a certain fascination for him. He liked, for example, to hear and to tell ghost stories. And, in the previous year, he had attended seances which had been organized by Lady Rothermere, at which P D Ouspensky, the "mystic", presided'.

Ouspensky arrived in London in 1921 as the author of **Tertium Organum**, although his subsequent **Strange Life of Ivan Osokin** fulfilled Messrs Walker's and Shelley-Mills hope that he would write something more accessible to a general readership. Kenneth Walker wrote the first draft of his books in school exercise books to be corrected by Shelley-Mills's at home off Eaton Square, at 39 Elizabeth Street, where Betty the cook prepared fantastic meals such as those described in **The Protege**. Frank not only scrupulously

edited Ouspensky's English but also shared T S Eliot's interest in the Russian mystics 'higher learning' and in 'psychic phenomema', and when he spent the summer months near his boyhood home, Colville, in Sussex, Frank tried to get Ouspensky disciples to perform acts which Evan Tredegar would never have contemplated. Chief among these was the putting of curses on his enemies who laughed at the Gurdjieff/Ouspensky way of life. The cursing took place during the black mass or by fouling their premises in exactly the same way as the first Mrs T S Eliot had done when she put excrement through the letter-box of Faber and Faber when she believed other directors were preventing her from seeing the husband who had walked out on her. Baroness Lee, the former Minister of the Arts, has written of how she dreaded the arrival of the post after the National Health Service came into existence when people sent her husband, Nye Bevan, parcels of shit, more than one of which came from Shelley-Mills and his medical friends. How well qualified was Shelley-Mills to research such works as Walker's **Diagnosis of Man**.

Frank combined all this with his intense religious feelings, and as the climax of his performances he would don a crown of thorns and he whipped from shoulders to feet by Jewish-looking young men. Many people might regard these goings-on as unusual, but of course such behaviour has been linked for centuries with religions of one sort or another. On 25 August 1988 the **Daily Telegraph** printed a photograph of Pakistani Shi'ites bleeding profusely at their annual flagellation to commemorate the martyrdom of the Shi'ite Imam Hussain, grandson of the Prophet Mohammed. The newspaper interviewed a fifteen year old boy, Shahid Hussein, who said, 'I felt very excited when I saw all the people around me doing this.' He had been performing 'Matum', the act of flagellation, since the age of ten and claimed that in the frenzy of religious experience the chain whip did not hurt, it would only be difficult to sleep on his back.

Nor does Islam, of course, have exclusive rights to this sort of thing. Many Christians are addicted to images of torture and gore. T S Eliot, for example, like Frank Shelley-Mills, felt awe for Mantegna's **St Sebastian** with the blood pouring from the arrow wounds. It inspired Eliot's **The Love Song of Saint Sebastian**, and in **Eliot's Early Years**, Lyndall Gordon says of the poem that it, 'represents Eliot's debates between body and soul carried beyond possibility of resolution. The poem is a ritualized attack on the flesh: in the first stanza, the body of the lover is whipped, in the second the body of the beloved is strangled.'

It was, however a cause of celebration when a parcel arrived at 39 Elizabeth Street with Faber and Faber's latest publication, **The Strange Life of Ivan Osokin**. Mrs Muriel Hicks and her sister Freda expressed delight at my sister's wedding breakfast when I pulled from my pocket a lucky charm

of a little gold whistle that once belonged to Percy Bysshe Shelley and my mother displayed Evan Tredegar's ruby ring. At least we were not completely Irish peasantry devoid of connection with 'nice people', so all seemed set for a fine relationship with my sister Eileen's in-laws. When Faber and Faber later, but in Eliot's lifetime, published how I obtained the Shelley whistle and exactly what took place at Tredegar Park and 39 Elizabeth Street, Muriel Hicks doubtless concluded that I at least was not a nice person. Many other readers of *The Protege* besides John McKeague knew that Evan Tredegar was not the only British toff to celebrate the black mass on Irish soil nor was Blake's house in Galway the only place where Evan astonished his audience by raising spirits of the dead.

In the same way as that celebrated London hostess, Lady Cunard, had taken her friends, including the Duke of Bedford, to Tredegar Park to see Evan in his witch's cloak cause a terrifying drop in temperature before a blazing fire, so Irish families on both sides of the Border loved to have the rich Lord Tredegar entertain their famous, but often boring, visitors. Some, like the Duke of Bedford, were not ashamed to write of house parties livened up no end by the Tredegar seances.

So it was entirely through Evan Tredegar's appearance in a book that I broke the ice with the rather frigid Muriel Hicks and her sister Freda. But the wedding finery could not disguise my mother's extremely strong Belfast accent which Mrs Hicks, like many people, could scarcely understand. My mother had adored meeting Evan Tredegar, who was aptly summed up by Harold Nicolson after Evan showed him 'a beside table littered with photographs of royalty in silver frames, and one of the late Pope cheek by jowl with that of an able-bodied sailor.' On the other hand, my mother found Mrs Hicks's airs and graces hard to take. This had nothing to do with my mother being a lukewarm Protestant and Mrs Hicks an ardent Catholic. It had to do with snobbery. The two women had one thing in common which was important in their lives. They were both grandmothers of the same five children that resulted from my sister Eileen's marriage to John Hicks. But if there had been a will there would certainly have been a way to overcome my mother's way of speaking.

The two grandmothers would never get on because Mrs Hicks was a snob. One day she said that my mother must come down and talk to her housekeeper. Muriel Hicks felt they would get on famously together. This well-meant condescension did not annoy my mother so much as make her even more homesick. My mother had nothing in suburban Ealing except to watch television after a long day of washing and cooking for the Hicks grandchildren and do other such tasks considered beneath the dignity of old Mrs Hicks's elevated position. Whatever memories of hardship Belfast held

for her, my mother loved the city's friendly streets and she longed to visit the Crown Liquor Saloon again with her old boyfriend, Billy McIlroy, who did not have a housekeeper and grand airs.

When James Boyce took his BBC television unit to capture places featured in *Ulster* we had to record the Crown Bar carefully where my mother went with Billy McIlroy for what she termed her 'medicine.' Her serious illnesses as a young woman had included mastoid operations after which the doctor ordered her to drink Guinness nightly to build up her strength. She did not feel this 'medicine' unduly breached her 'pledge-signing' as a mill-girl with the wicked aunt, Catherine Devine. But in Ealing even a simple thing like Guinness became a social embarrassment. Mrs Hicks always had a bottle of the best whisky to offer the priests and me while she and Aunt Freda sipped sherry. Only once did my mother dare to ask if there was 'A wee bottle of stout around.' The glare she got perfectly demonstrated the great gulf between the two grandmothers' worlds.

I wrote of my mother's favourite pub, '...there was the Crown Liquor Saloon, transfigured into a glory never before seen in Belfast, or, I suspect, anywhere else either. As with most late Victorian building the taste was open to question but the craftsmen's skill was undeniable. Almost every conceivable motif of Classical decoration was there and yet, curiously, the place remained quite distinctly a Belfast bar. There was the long counter, with an elaborate theatre-box-like front done in highly moulded glazed tiles. There was the elaborate carved wood shelving behind, housing the barrels and their beautiful brass fittings. There were the Corinthian columns picked out in green and gold, and, most important of all, the box-pews arranged round the walls for small groups to retire in comparative privacy. The most loving work was lavished on the carving of these "snugs" whose screens were filled with carved panels and engraved glass and whose corner posts were topped like newels with lions and griffins bearing armorial shields with Latin mottoes like *Audaces Fortuna Juvat*.'

As my mother had now given up her house in Belfast and sold her furniture to go and help my sister raise her family in Ealing, I went to see her and even Mrs Hicks and her confessor Father Philip Clarke of Ealing Abbey who numbered among the international group of priests that clustered around Evan Tredegar whose excesses excited the rather drab, schoolmaster Clarke. Known by more than my mother as 'Old Money-bags', Mrs Muriel Hicks ruled what was, by my mother's standards but not by those of the Tredegar Estate in the East End, an extensive empire of freehold business properties in Ealing. This set her apart from ordinary mortals who found it difficult to form relationships with her. No wonder, for how is one expected to relate to people who regard the purchase of expensive religious works of art as a perfectly

normal, every day occurrence?

Muriel Hicks passed a bejewelled rosary to me and my mother one evening for us to examine. Although brought up in Belfast to believe such things are the 'Devil's Beads', my mother smiled politely and passed it on to me. She failed, of course, to understand that it was the rosary's provenance rather than the jewels as such which appealed to Mrs Hicks. 'Blessed by Pope Benedict the Fifteenth, of course,' she said. Aunt Freda butted in, 'No dear, not Benedict the Fifteenth. We didn't get to Rome until Pius the Eleventh was crowned.' Back came the reply, 'But Evan was Chamberlain to Benedict the Fifteenth, and he told me so.' Her sister intended to have the last word, 'But Evan was also Capa y Spada to his successor, Pius the Eleventh. I always remember Evan bringing the lovely Scottish Princess Doria to the King's birthday celebrations at the Embassy.' Touché.

If Aunt Freda's heyday had been as a diplomatic hostess in Rome before the war, a city she still loved to live in, my mother's proud city was Belfast and homesickness got the better of her and leaving the rarified atmosphere of Ealing she went to live again in Belfast, and it did not surprise me to be called there to help her tour the auction rooms while furnishing her new home. There was no tension as she and I sat in a Crown Bar snug trying to explain the glory that was Aunt Freda's Rome to Billy McLroy. Indeed it was not until ten years later in 1964 when Sir Francis Evans gave the reception for my book *Ulster*, did my mother feel she could look the elevated Mrs Hicks straight in the eye.

Although only the Ulster Agent and I were billed to address the crowded reception, nothing could stop Knox Cunningham delivering himself on the new situation in Ulster. He was a master of the quip but as in his treatment of Bernadette Devlin, the repartee was not always apposite. With champagne flowing and a captive audience, Knox had to show his superiority. Hugh Montgomery had already been proclaimed monsignor by his old friend, Giovanni Battista Montini, now the new Pope Paul VI. In the August 1963 edition of Westminster Cathedral's Chronicle Hugh wrote about their first meeting when Pope Paul was a junior Vatican official, and Hugh the First Secretary at the British Mission with Alec Randall.

Long before I had ever met him or before Hugh Montgomery had brought him to my home, Alec Randall had gone out of his way to give my books enthusiastic reviews. Knox Cunningham was not to be outdone and at the Ulster Office reception told some extraordinary stories about my Campbell relations. My sister and husband, John Hicks were present as well as friends, and I was not amused when Knox Cunningham said that John Hicks's uncle, the diplomat in Rome, had scandalised that city of scandals by his affairs with young girls, one of whom, his own children's nanny, he had run off with. My

mother, however, felt some satisfaction on learning that even a cupboard as grand as Muriel Hicks's had a skeleton in it.

The Prime Minister in Northern Ireland who had brought about so many changes in the province, even to having such a known rebel as myself commissioned to write the *Ulster* book, was Captain Terence O' Neill, and Knox Cunningham actually forgot to shout 'To Hell with the Pope' as he saluted the new Northern Ireland that had emerged under O' Neill. Then the champagne-filled Cunningham started up about the recently published *The Protege* and the pictures of Evan Tredegar and Frank Shelley-Mills I put in it. When Cunningham went on to say that Evan used to amuse the British diplomatic corps, including Hugh Montgomery with his friend Montini, by celebrating black mass in Rome's Protestant Cemetery, Sir Alec Randall roared with laughter.

Randall's own book *Discovering Rome* is full of such pieces as this on Pope Innocent X 'The Pope was completely dominated by his brother's wife, the rapacious and masterful Olimpia. The scandals of her avarice and alleged other vices were the stock-in-trade of Protestant propagandists in the seventeenth century, and are mentioned in the once best-selling Victorian novel about Rome of that time, J H Shorthouse's *John Inglesant*. But in Rome, too, her notoriety was hardly less, and "Pasquino" made two puns about her: 'Olimpia-olim pia' (once pure), and 'Innocent X, instead of guarding Olympus, guarded Olympia.'

However at the Ulster Office party, people generally agreed that I had done well in my book to dismiss Paisley in this way, 'The Presbyterian Church today is still a large and influential body in Northern Ireland and in harmonious accord with the Church of Ireland which Swift would certainly have disliked. The biggest embarrassment today is not the entanglement with any Establishment but with a minority group who call themselves the Free Presbyterian Church, led by the Rev Ian Paisley. These extremists recently picketed a meeting held by the ex-Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, because he had attended the World Council of Churches at New Delhi.' Little did Sir Alec Randall realise what Protestant propagandists both Knox Cunningham and Ian Paisley would become, outdoing even J H Shorthouse in their abuse of the Popes' personal lives.

Two years later after the launching party Sir Francis Evans wrote to me, 'I was delighted to get your letter and I hope you will forgive me for not replying sooner to your very thoughtful letter. But, as you may know, I retire as Ulster Agent today and hope to return to my home in Helen's Bay early in September and hope that we will see you sometimes there when we get settled down. All of us were saddened by the turn of events in Northern Ireland this year and by the damaging publicity which resulted. It was all the more

distressing as it came at a time, as you will know, when community relations were steadily improving. Indeed one of the results of this improvement - and the talks initiated by Captain O' Neill with Mr Lemass - has been the troubles of which we have read so much. They were a much to be condemned backlash. You will be heartened to know that Protestant extremism and the activities of its leaders, including Mr Paisley, has been utterly rejected by the Prime Minister, members of his Government, Church Leaders, the Northern Ireland Press and other responsible figures in Ulster.....All of us, who love Ulster, are deeply concerned about events....'

The meeting between North and South Prime Ministers had been warmly accepted, and even the Grand Orange Lodge and the Ulster Unionist Council had given O' Neill a vote of confidence. Yet I was astonished that a man with Knox Cunningham's background should join the ranks of O' Neill's critics led by Ian Paisley. My mother grew extremely apprehensive that John McKeague who had sat in her parlour discussing Evan Tredegar's house-party games, should now stand trial with others, for their bombing campaign which led to Terence O' Neill's downfall. My mother decided that not even nights in the Crown Liquor Saloon with Billy McIlroy could keep her exposed to danger in the civil war in Belfast so she crossed the Irish Sea for the last time. Ian Paisley's minority group had grown sufficiently powerful to oust O' Neill and his practice of the moderation preached by Bishop MacNeice in his famous 1935 sermon which I quoted in my book *Ulster*. MacNeice's doctrine of moderation became obsolete as the British troops moved in and the bloody war spread. Meanwhile at Belfast Cathedral, my old tutor Sammy Crooks had become dean and was trying hard to combat the written propaganda published by the paramilitary groups in defence of the bullet. But with Paisley and his forces their fanatical religious beliefs were deeply entangled with politics. When the Dean of Belfast invited Cardinal Leo Josef Suenens, the retired Primate of Belgium, to preach in St Anne's Protestant Cathedral, Paisley somehow got hold of some old newspaper cuttings about a 1970 Catholic congress in Brussels over which Cardinal Suenens had presided.

According to Paisley's translations of events, the Brussels congress began with friendly dancing and drinking, those two social activities so despised by evangelicals. But the youthful revelling turned into an orgy when at the altar, 'something was beginning to rise and take on an unbelievable shape. It was at first greeted with gasps, then giggles, and finally pandemonium broke loose as the transparent plastic forming the shape was seen to represent a gigantic penis. The delegates screamed themselves hoarse, feeling it was a challenge to -a recognition of - their virility. It was the sort of climax that had never been imagined and might only figure in the most extravagant of bawdy dreams.'

Paisley explained this 'amazing exhibition of carnal tomfoolery' as the work of the Bishop of Rome, the Pope himself. Both Pope Paul VI and Cardinal Suenens were not real Christians but masters of pagan temples where 'atavistic rites, all with sexual undertones, take the place of religion...When the adolescent girls shrieked with delighted embarrassment at the large plastic penis rose before them, Cardinal Suenens knew perfectly well that they were, as he intended, commemorating the heathen god Baal whose name has several meanings, among them are the lord, master, possessor or husband, while others refer to a controlling male's penis with its forceful boring and thrusting. So what the Cardinal arranged for the young, mostly girls, of Brussels was a show of phallic worship, which symbolises the generative power contained in the semen, or life juice, which streamed down upon life and nature from the mighty penis of Baal.'

But it was his old enemy, the Bishop of Rome, Paisley really wanted to attack and claimed that Pope Paul VI had used a 'praise chant' which came from pagan worship where the power of the semen was preached. Paisley explained how, 'During public displays of mass sexual intercourse, which go by the name of fertility rites, this semen, when ejaculated, was caught in the hands of the officiating priests, who held it up for the approval of Yahweh (the Lord) and then proceeded to smear it on their bodies.'

A few days later when Cardinal Suenens mounted St Anne's pulpit over two-hundred of Paisley's Free Presbyterians shouted outside while amongst the first to stand up in the cathedral and abuse the ancient cardinal was Paisley's artist daughter Rhonda. Eventually she and her supporters were escorted out of the cathedral by the police.

How much of all this Paisley got via the legal mind behind so many of the Free Presbyterian schemes, Sir Knox Cunningham QC, MP, I do not know. I had heard him in the past when boasting of himself as the Heavy Weight Champion of Cambridge University, saying that Catholics worshipped gigantic phalluses like the children of Israel setting up the idol of the golden calf. But over twenty years before Paisley's attempts to embarrass Cardinal Suenens, London itself had seen the famous production of Schoenberg's *Moses and Aaron* complete with frenzied men and women of Covent Garden's chorus worshipping a phallus as big, if not bigger, than that at the later Brussels congress.

I did know that Knox Cunningham's name appeared in letters I wrote to his Ulster friends and which Sir George Terry's Sussex Police came to see me about. A boy had been murdered near my Rottingdean home of the 1970s, close to where I had seen Evan Tredegar in 1944 perform his black mass, and equally close to the grave where Evan's friend Aleister Crowley, the Great Beast, lay in Brighton's Bear Road Cemetery.

In 1987, Colin Wallace came to see me in Ealing and I felt that at last the cover-ups of child sex abuse and of murder were likely to be exposed. It would eventually be impossible for any government to silence the growing number of people such as Colin Wallace who had evidence of cover-ups by Knox Cunningham and others. I listened intently as Colin talked about the murdered ten year old Brian McDermott with 'witchcraft overtones.' I was particularly interested to hear about John McKeague's boast that he, McKeague, would never be prosecuted for that murder because he knew 'too much about some people.'

Personal Vendettas

People envied Bob Harbinson his house for apart from having a side archway to the backyard, it stood so near the local pub that you could take a ewer into the jug-and-bottle entrance for a fill of porter without troubling to change your carpet slippers or even bothering to put in your Sunday ornaments, others besides my mother having had their natural teeth removed as teenage millgirls. The Harbinsons' neighbours were Billy and Jeannie McIlroy with two daughters older than me. My father's friends held the Harbinson house in high esteem because those two betes noire of evangelical society, drinking and dancing, took place there. No wonder the saved great-aunts were shocked.

Were not Ulster's Protestants the chosen of God when the ancient Jews came with Jacob's pillow to Ireland? King Fergus of Dalriads certainly took the Stone of Destiny, the *Lia Fail*, as the stone pillow became known, from Ireland to Scotland in the sixth century before it got to its present place in Westminster Abbey for British sovereigns to be crowned on, but nobody had been able to take away the Ulsterman's claim to be descended from a lost tribe of Israel. Nevertheless, the more fire and brimstone my father and his brothers got threatened with by William Fulton outside Moses Hunter's pub, the more wildly they danced in their drunken glee. I loved the Harbinson parlour on a Saturday night with its warmth and spontaneity, packed with people dancing and singing, all to the smell of porter and Billy McIlroy's pipe tobacco.

If my mother never came to speak with a Malone accent, let alone an Ealing one, she never lost that inborn sense of music which my father had too. I grew up hearing her break into the latest music-hall song or a snatch of some evangelical hymn remembered from her own childhood. Nobody taught her to dance but she took naturally to the floor and, with the ease of so many Irish and African women, simply allowed her body to sway to the accordion 'squeeze-box' or fiddle. Another of my first memories is of my mother swinging furiously in an Irish reel with 'Uncle' Billy as we called Billy McIlroy, egged-on by calls from my father playing his squeeze-box.

For some reason I have never been able to fathom, after my father died his squeeze-box was sent to Canada to his sister Cissy Dickson in Montreal where I would one day play it, although my aunt remained until her death a member of the Plymouth Brethren. But music and dancing did not stop when the squeeze-box went off to Aunt Cissy in Canada. However hard my mother worked during the week, and in winter she usually began at six in the morning to stoke the boiler in Ulsterville Avenue School and to clean the classrooms,

she loved her evenings of 'medicine' in the Crown Liquor Saloon and an hour or so on Saturday night at whatever hall sported her favourite band which might ask Uncle Billy to sing. Visits to the Harbinsons' had come to an end for, quite apart from Great-aunt Catherine's disapproval, their house was too close to the McIlroy's, an undesirable proximity as I was soon to discover. Only once did Uncle Billy come rather drunk into St Simon's Church and with his fine tenor voice upset John Armstrong's hen-and-cock choir with too forceful a rendering of the hymns.

The purpose of Uncle Billy's daily visits to our house in Donegall Avenue had to be kept sub rosa since otherwise we feared Canon Maguire might stop the fifteen shillings a week from the orphan fund. Nor was Uncle Billy rich, for in spite of being a train driver, often on the Derry express itself, his take-home pay was frequently less than we got from my mother's work and the orphan fund. In November 1932, while my father lay paralysed in plaster from his window-cleaning fall, the railway companies applied to the Railway Wages Board for a fifteen per cent cut in employees' wages. This would have brought Billy's pay to below £2 a week. A long and bitter strike began with students from Queen's University showing their superiority by supporting the railway office who scabbed on Billy and his fellow trade unionists led from London. It was Uncle Billy who impressed on me the importance of being a trade union member, and in due course I joined the Society of Authors.

Trade Union niceties are one thing but quite another is the even trickier business of union in marriage which Billy also taught me, though more by example than precept. His daily visits to our house seemed perfectly natural and because they pleased my mother, they also pleased me. Billy's divorce from our much-loved 'Aunt' Jeannie was totally out of the question, not because his low wages made it impossible anyway, but because our sort of people just did not get divorced. We did not know any divorced people, apart from the unproveable rumours about a certain schoolmaster. The only divorce that personally affected us was the one which gave us another good reason for fighting the wicked Popes who refused the good Protestant King of England, Henry VIII, a divorce. True, later on we blasphemously carolled 'Hark the herald angels sing, Mrs Simpson pinched our King.'

But in spite of Billy's relationship with my mother, divorce proceedings were not for the likes of him. For a time after my father died, I went to Billy and Jeannie McIlroy's home to take and receive Christmas presents. Jeannie McIlroy had a touch of the Malone accent and manners more genteel than my mother's and she wore the finest of silk modesty-vests. In short, she would have got on well with Muriel Hicks in far-away Ealing.

But one summer day Aunt Jeannie bore down Donegall Avenue, her

usually-kind face looking drawn and hard as I rushed up to her. She asked me harshly, 'Have you seen my Billy?' Rebuffed and puzzled I told her yes, Uncle Billy had come in to our house just before tea with a quart of cockles and we had got them out of their shells with pins and ate them with our soda-farls and margarine. Billy had a weakness for such seafood and could not resist the cockle-stalls on the street corners. But Aunt Jeannie did not want to know about food. She wanted to know why nobody answered our front-door knocker when I knocked and shouted excitedly through the letter-box, 'Uncle Billy, Aunt Jeannie's out here and wants a wee word with ya.'

As in so much of Belfast, a narrow lane ran at the back of the houses in Donegall Avenue which we called an 'entry'. By day, the dust-bin men and jam-pot collectors went down the entry, and by night activities of a more private nature took place there, while in times of trouble, especially in the 1980s as in the 1930s when a curfew was called, terrorists could escape easily through the city's network of entries, and particularly through those like our side of Donegall Avenue which had wide railway verges opposite our backdoors. At that stage in my life I had never heard of the Greek goddess Nemesis, but sure enough, there she stood looking for all the world like Aunt Jeannie, posed for action, on our doorstep.

To be fair, nobody liked a hen fight more than the local women, especially when an errant cock caused the feathers to fly. I hesitated before going down the entry, for I knew instinctively that I would be betraying both my mother and Uncle Billy. But Aunt Jeannie nagged me and I back-lipped her. She threatened to box my ears being, of course, much too refined to utter the normal adult admonitions such as, 'I'll bloody well do ya' or my mother's favourite, 'I'll swing for ya yet.' My mother was handy at beating me whenever Canon Maguire or the police called to report my misdeeds. Being caned on the hands was almost a daily event at school, but I hated being boxed on the ears and to this day my hearing feels the effects.

But before Aunt Jeannie had time to box my ears or any other part of me, our front door opened. Aunt Jeannie wanted to push past my mother to search the bedrooms upstairs for her missing husband, so my mother and she exchanged black eyes. When calm had been restored I was sent off to find Billy who, of course had made his good escape down the entry and now sat in the pub steadying his nerves by more than his usual tick on the slate, for apart from half-a-dozen bottles of stout there had to be a cheap bottle of sweet red wine for Aunt Jeannie. Leeches to suck blood from the black eyes could be got from the chemist later. Not that Aunt Jeannie was a 'Red Biddy Girl', since the merest sip went straight to her head. Nevertheless, the bottle of wine helped the peace negotiations, out of which came the honourable treaty by which both women agreed to share Billy's affections which they did for the

next forty years.

But if Billy and his wife delighted in my books' descriptions of life at 130 Donegall Avenue, Mrs Muriel Hicks did not, not even after we learnt of her sister Freda's ignominy in losing her husband to the children's nanny. Still, Mrs Hicks's and Aunt Freda's lives had many consolations although they were not the only rich women to attend the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster's Low Week reception. Bernard Griffin might have been the 'shrewd, vain, common' man Evelyn Waugh wrote about, but in his sumptuous scarlet robes he looked every bit of a prince of the church, smiling as the Duke of Norfolk introduced the latest convert to the faith, Her Serene Highness, Princess Carlos de Rohan.

Writing to John Davenport on 11 May 1939, Dylan Thomas said, 'Invitations to sherry and princesses from Tredegar.' The Letters of Dylan Thomas give this footnote, 'The second Viscount Tredegar, Evan Frederic Morgan (1893-1949) was a writer, and had money. He is said to appear in Ronald Firbank's novel *The Flower Beneath the Foot*, as an eccentric Englishman from Wales, the Hon. 'Eddie' Monteith, who joins an archaeological expedition to Sodom.'

As well as cultivating members of the British royal family, Evan had a penchant for more sophisticated princesses especially those who spoke French such as Princess Carlos de Rohan and her foster sister, Princess Alphonse de Chimay, both of whom had strong Ulster connections which Anthony Blunt used to enmesh me.

Besides enjoying sherry with Evan Tredegar and a bit of black mass, Evan's fellow-poet from Wales, Dylan Thomas, also liked eccentric women, including Wyn Henderson, the publisher. Writing to Desmond Hawkins about Wyn's affair with Havelock Ellis, Dylan stated, '... I've got some nice true stories for it about Havelock Pelvis. I met a woman down here who used to stay in his house; she says that every morning of the first few weeks of her visit he came into her bedroom with a cup of tea; when she'd finished it, he gave her another one and asked her, "Now do you want to make water?" Then he'd give her another cup of tea and ask her, "Surely now you want to make water." Then he'd give her another cup of tea and hold the chamber pot up invitingly and say, "Now surely you must make water now."'

Reviewing John Mortimer's autobiography in 1984 I wrote of **Clinging to the Wreckage**, 'A large part of John Mortimer's life was transformed when he entered Wyn Henderson's world. With Virginia Woolf gone, Wyn liked to think of herself as the queen of Bloomsbury's haute couture, and her son married Virginia's niece. Wyn's position was often challenged by her friend (and frequent enemy) Princess Dil de Rohan. Mortimer writes: "the story of Wyn Henderson might provide a novel in itself" because the true Bloomsbury

story would have to contain the official and written records, including those "passing off" documents designed to cut pompous men-of-letters down to size. The most extraordinary of these letters was faked by T S Eliot as coming from the local town clerk about an A J Manning statue. The last time I saw Wyn and the Princess in public they were fighting with the police over whether or not an author lodger had masterminded the attempt to blow up Mr Krushchev's warship in English waters. Soon after this the ancient Wyn went into hospital to die, where a young Dominican monk visited her. Mr Mortimer adds, "the sight of this monk had a totally revitalising effect on Wyn. She made a rapid recovery, left the hospital and in almost no time at all had married the monk.'"

When this book was being written, more than forty years had passed since Mortimer and I met Wyn Henderson and her daughter-in-law, Virginia Woolf's niece, whom he described as 'a thin and remarkably silent girl who sat in the shadows like an echo of the Great Days of Bloomsbury.' In contrast, Wyn was remarkably fat and talkative, and during those four decades since Mortimer first heard Wyn discuss her lovers, many books have come out confirming Wyn's position not only as a sex symbol but as a significant publisher in London and Paris. In his biography of Aleister Crowley, John Symonds says that Wyn Henderson and James Cleugh were, 'The leading lights of Aquila Press.' Books about Nancy Cunard and the Hours Press in Paris make Wyn's importance there quite clear since she remained in charge while Nancy went off for long periods abroad with her black or homosexual lovers.

Deirdre Bair's biography of Samuel Beckett observes, 'In the 1930s, Beckett's physical attractiveness and dark, brooding silences had prompted Wyn Henderson to tell Peggy Guggenheim that Beckett had the same forbidden quality of a monk or priest that made him irresistibly attractive to women.' John Mortimer also gives a good insight into Wyn's nature when he describes how, on the death of her old lover Dylan Thomas, Wyn 'became a close friend of his widow Caitlin with whom she travelled round Europe and lived for a while in Italy.' On her return to London Wyn launched her affair with Dylan's fellow producer at the BBC, the Rev W R Rodgers from Ulster, before the young Dominican monk got released from his vows and married the already ancient Wyn. Not only did Wyn keep up with her ex-lovers but also with their womenfolk such as Dylan's widow. Havelock Ellis had written to Wyn after their first meeting, 'For myself, in personal relationships, my ideal is affectionate intimacy, with something of the body in it, and something of the spirit harmoniously blended...' But behind Wyn's back Ellis wrote to Margaret Sanger that he had discovered that his new friend and publisher was 'dangerous.'

Wyn could be ruthless indeed to anyone with nerve enough to challenge her entrenchment as Queen of Bloomsbury. However, the person who came closest to usurping Wyn's position most frequently was Princess Carlos de Rohan, but not in any way connected with literature, but simply over the borrowing of money. John Mortimer says that Wyn 'must have been an unworldly woman' because in spite of her long association with the famous and very rich 'she had preserved no money.' Although Wyn had first met me when Evan Tredegar was kissing Cardinal Griffin's ring in the 1940s, it was only after my sister Eileen married John Hicks in 1952 that the 'dangerous' Wyn imagined that the much younger Mrs Muriel Hicks and her sister Freda were 'cassock chasers' like herself who found the 'forbidden quality of a monk of priest that made' them so 'irresistibly attractive to women.'

Wyn also imagined that through our mutual friends money for herself could be wrung out of the two rich Ealing women who had so much freehold property while she had difficulty paying her council flat rent. The wife of W R Rodgers committed suicide and afterwards he ran off with his BBC boss's wife and lived in Colchester with her and because the boss's children went too, the boss arranged for the quietly-spoken Bertie Rodgers to get enough freelance work to pay the grocer. In this way Bertie reviewed a number of my books on the BBC as well as in the **Sunday Times**. Coming from Ulster, he not only knew many characters in my books, disguised or undisguised by the libel lawyers, but also Louis MacNeice and Eric Ewens with whom Bertie and I often walked home to my flat after our interviews.

First, however, we had to have 'drinkies' with Wyn, to use her own term, and if her Dominican was present, Wyn would demonstrate her ecumenical spirit by holding the hand of the Catholic monk, who sat on one side of her on the divan-sofa, as well as the hand of the Presbyterian minister, Bertie, who sat on the other side, over her ample, earth-goddess stomach. But even before reading about Evan and his black magic practices, in **The Protege**, Wyn knew of my interest in her much earlier lover who celebrated the real black mass where sexual intercourse with women figured as importantly as the buggering of the high priest, Aleister Crowley.

In 1963 when I returned home to write **Ulster** Peter Montgomery, and indeed the Northern Ireland government, was most anxious that I see as much as possible of Senator Lennon, the Catholic leader. I wrote, 'Senator Lennon had held several discussions with Sir George Clarke trying to define their differences and find ways to ease much of the bigotry which had plagued Northern Ireland for so long.' When these talks failed Clarke resigned as Grand Master of the Orange Order and was replaced by Hellfire Jack Bryans of the Custom House steps fame.

But as Jerry Lennon drove me and other interested parties all over the

province we were most hopeful of both sides coming together. We went fishing and then home to strawberries and cream in his beautiful rose garden, and then 'Jerry brought the car round and we set off for Loughgall... We talked then about the writer and poet who had been the Presbyterian minister here for twelve years - W R Rodgers. Some months before returning to Ulster I had listened to a BBC Sunday afternoon concert and during the interval heard a soft voice begin the interval talk **The Full Circle**, 'For the hare I was told runs always in a circle. Any lad who wanted to hunt had only to go to a hilltop and blow the horn and instantly, from every valley-farm within earshot, a hound would emerge and hurry to the spot.' It was only in 1946 that W R Rodgers left his manse in Loughgall to join the BBC in London. It seemed odd for a man immersed in some of Ireland's most beautiful countryside, out of contact with the smart world of contemporary writing, to emerge suddenly as a significant poet.'

Wyn Henderson and her Dominican monk were delighted to read this of her Bertie, and in the same spirit that prompted Jerry Lennon and I to make all sorts of contacts aimed at getting Catholics and Protestants talking together in Northern Ireland, Wyn, being a profoundly religious woman, really believed she actively promoted Christian unity by holding the monk's and Bertie's hands in Christian fellowship while reciting for us those stories John Mortimer has recorded of her many lovers.

I lived in Guilford Street, near my publishers who were then in Russell square, so Faber staff often called in to sample my homemade wine. To reach Russell Square I had to pass Princess de Rohan's flat and a public lavatory Tom Driberg, the Labour MP used to visit. Wyn Henderson also lived nearby and so when Bertie Rodgers came up from Colchester to broadcast or collect his review books from the **Sunday Times** office around the corner in Gray's Inn Road, we all often met. **The Belfast Telegraph** was owned by Times Newspapers and its London editor Percy Dymond also had his office in the same **Sunday Times** building. Percy Dymond, like so many reporters would lunch in the local pub, and he would join Louis MacNeice and myself if he wanted to fill up his 'London To-Day' column.

While walking in the country one day, Bertie Rodgers found a particularly fine dead barn owl which he had preserved and brought it to me as a present, so making an excuse for a celebration. Percy Dymond could not resist getting the owl photographed and made a story about it for the 'London To-Day' column. But Anthony Blunt was not pleased when Peter Montgomery sent him the press cutting which said that Tom Driberg had been at the owl party. Blunt had reason to fear Driberg.

The Times obituary described Tom Driberg as 'journalist, an intellectual, a drinking man, a gossip, a high churchman, a homosexual, a

liturgist, a friend of Lord Beaverbrook, an enemy of Lord Beaverbrook...a stylist, an unreliable man of undoubted distinction. He looked and talked like a bishop, not least in the bohemian clubs which he frequented. He was the admiration and despair of his friends.' He was certainly the despair of Princess de Rohan and Anthony Blunt. Both Dil de Rohan and I lived in top flats and between us stood the underground gents' lavatory clearly visible to us both. Tom was outspoken about his sexual conquests and in **Ruling Passions** told us about which public lavatories he frequented and the story of his 1935 court case over his exploits in bed with two unemployed miners. When Princess de Rohan opened her window to hurl unladylike abuse at Tom emerging from the underground gents, Tom gave her un-bishop-like replies. Anthony Blunt rarely made a fool of himself, but he did over his handling of Tom Driberg and Dil de Rohan.

The authority at M15 who had infiltrated both extreme Left and Right was Charles Henry Maxwell Knight, always called Max. He had joined the service in 1924 before Blunt and a younger Henry Maxwell had been to Cambridge with Peter Montgomery. At university Henry Maxwell and Peter Montgomery shared rooms and after coming down from Cambridge Henry started his long affair with Evan Tredegar. Blunt shunned the pair as being too Right wing. His dislike of Evan Tredegar and Henry Maxwell was as strong as Max Knight's distrust of Blunt whose former assistant, Lord Clanmorris, stated in 1985, 'Max once said of Blunt: "I'm not letting that bugger anywhere near the office." I think Max just had an instinct about him.'

Before becoming a Labour MP in 1942 Tom Driberg had been instructed by Max Knight to join the Communist Party and spy out the land. Max had more than a passing fancy for the good-looking Tom and, like many people, preferred his company to that of the more-pretentious Blunt. But Blunt was the better spy and he was soon reading the supposedly-secret reports Tom wrote on his fellow communists. The wonder was not that the Party expelled him but that Tom was naive enough, as he states in **Ruling Passions**, to ask a senior Party official, 'was it because of sex? Or Religion? Or something I had written in my column?'

Tom's position in Fleet Street, and after 1942 in Parliament, gave Blunt cause for regret over such a crossing of wires for such wire-crossing could be dangerous. Now Blunt in 1964 was reading in Percy Dymond's column about my meetings with Driberg and Bertie Rodgers. But after his confession and getting immunity that year from prosecution Anthony Blunt's confidence grew, as did his arrogance. During Peter Montgomery's regular stays at the Courtauld Institute, I always called to take Peter out to Henry Maxwell's flat. After drinks and looking at old photographs of Tredegar Park and Lord Alfred Douglas, we would go out to one of the restaurants where Evan Tredegar had

taken us in the 1940s. Henry would be emotionally touched if a waiter remembered him but utterly alarmed if a whisper went round that Nancy Cunard was back in London and might come into the restaurant.

Wyn Henderson also feared Nancy Cunard's return from Paris for they had parted from the Hours Press in acrimony. Nancy's biographer, Anne Chisholm, writes, 'The end of the Hours Press was not happy. Richard Aldington was unaccountably angry when he discovered that Wyn Henderson rather than Nancy was in charge of his latest book, **Last Straws**, although it made a profit and he had no cause to complain. Soon afterwards, she found that Wyn Henderson had run out of money and that more was needed to pay off the final bills...To Wyn's amazement and indignation, Nancy quarreled violently with her and broke off their close friendship.'

One of the few points on which Nancy Cunard and Henry Maxwell agreed was that Wyn Henderson had not only on many occasions slept with Nancy's black lover, and fellow-publisher, Henry Crowder, but had sent the missing money to Crowder's family in America. On 13 June 1930 Evelyn Waugh went to a cocktail party given by Harold Acton and afterwards wrote in his diary that he met 'Nancy Cunard and her negress and an astonishing, fat Mrs Henderson.' 'Negress' was perhaps Waugh's joke, for Henry Crowder was popular with the Hours Press's gay authors such as Brian Howard and W H Auden. Perhaps Nancy's closest friends throughout her life were homosexual men since as a girl she fell in love with Evan Tredegar. Of Nancy's wedding to Sydney Fairbairn in 1916 Anne Chisholm writes, 'At the party Nancy encountered Evan Morgan, whereupon in an odd but prophetic gesture she tore off the wreath of gold flowers around her head and flung it to the ground.'

I much prefer the account of Nancy's wedding by Sir Shane Leslie, 'Recurrent visits to Tredegar in Monmouthshire, home of Evan Morgan, a Welsh Peer, left memories. I saw him through a matrimonial essay which Pius XI unadvisedly bade him try when his heart was set on the priesthood. His quaint character made Roman excitement when he entered the Beda College. As he was already a lay member of the Pope's household, he assumed the purple and entered on his studies accompanied by secretary and valet...Perhaps it was a tragedy that he had not married Nancy Cunard, seeming so winsomely suited. Evan told me of the scene Nancy made at her wedding to another which she made him unwillingly attend. Arriving late he ran into the bride's entry, whereupon she tragically broke her bouquet and handed him half in full sight of all parties...Evan was easy to caricature, and he was once represented running down Victoria station in Papal uniform to the amazement of a trainload of cocottes and British holiday-makers to stop the Golden Arrow with the agonized cry: "Secret papers for the Holy Father!"'

Now Evan's young Italian friend, Giovanni Battista Montini had been

crowned as Pope Paul VI, and Hugh Montgomery wrote to me on 21 February 1966, 'Did I tell you, by the way, that I had informed Pope Paul (in my Christmas letter) that the infant son of our caretaker (Jerry Twomey) had been baptised "Paul" by his father's wish, tho' everyone else wanted him to be called Patrick, and that in response to this I was sent a special medal of the Pope "destined for the little parishioner who has been given the name Paul." A most kind and typical Pauline gesture: there are some advantages I find in being "notus pontifici." The day would come when Hugh regretted writing so much about his early friendship with the Pope.

Meanwhile it was impossible to stop Wyn Henderson telling her young Dominican monk about early days in publishing and adventures with both Evan Tredegar and Aleister Crowley. Evan was as famous in Paris as Nancy Cunard and Nina Hamnett, the outrageous queen of the bohemian life in London and Paris, who wrote a book published in 1932, *Laughing Torso*, about her life in the French capital with Evan, Picasso, Modigliani and Aleister Crowley. She loved going to parties dressed in Nancy Cunard's old evening dresses which certainly would not have fitted her rival, the 'astonishing, fat Mrs Henderson.' The book's launching took place at the Zwemmer Gallery in London which had an exhibition of the author's paintings. The well-known and well-heeled people who met the press at the launch party included Evan Tredegar, Lord Berners, Constant Lambert, Augustus John and Harold Nicolson. Aleister Crowley did not go but sued Nina Hamnett and her publisher over her reference to the black magic when 'one day a baby was said to have disappeared mysteriously' from Crowley's temple at Cefalu in Sicily. A special jury ended the action with a verdict in favour of Nina Hamnett. Crowley's and Evan's interest in black magic were too well known to be denied in a law court.

Anthony Blunt never forgot that his old enemy at M15, Max Knight, was Evan Tredegar's friend with more than a passing interest in the black mass. When he read Percy Dymond's account of Bertie Rodgers bringing me an owl, he assumed it had formed part of a black mass celebration for not only did Evan Tredegar have a sinister liking for owls indoors, but Max Knight had an even more sinister love of snakes which shared his bed. And the owl had come from W R Rodgers the close friend of Louis MacNeice, and at that time Blunt still had not been allowed to see *The Strings Are False* about his own close ties with the poet. Louis's literary executor E R Dodds did not like Blunt because of his written criticism of all religious matters in Louis's autobiography and elsewhere.

MacNeice was fascinated by Evan Tredegar's black mass performances and the written accounts of them, and always wanted to see Mrs W B Yeats conduct a seance. In *The Strings Are False* Louis wrote, 'Dodds and I went

to tea with W B Yeats in Rathfarnham. We were hoping he would talk poetry and gossip, but knowing Dodds was a professor of Greek he confined the conversation to spiritualism and the phases of the moon...Burnet, Yeats said, was all wrong; the Ionian physicists had of course not been physicists at all, The Ionian physicists were spiritualists. He talked a great deal about the spirits to whom his wife, being a medium, had introduced him.'

Although living in England, Bertie Rodgers continued to immerse himself in Ulster affairs much more than Louis MacNeice or I did, and he sat on the Arts Council of Northern Ireland over which Blunt's close friend Peter Montgomery presided. At that time in the 1960s Montgomery was distinguishing himself trying to get a better deal for artists generally and writers in particular, though he did not like discussing the subject with Bertie at my home since he failed, like many, to understand the poet's soft voice.

No matter how drunk Bertie Rodgers got with Wyn and her monk, in a few days I would get a letter such as this about the Arts Council; 'Thank you for your kindness and hospitality the other night. I have, as yet, had no reply from Northern Ireland. The Standing Committee is no doubt sitting on the point. Meanwhile I should be obliged if you would summarize for me your views on writing, the position of writers, and possible ways of encouraging writers...' Wyn Henderson, with her long history of publishing in London and Paris, had of course, her own views on how writers should be encouraged. But Wyn was by now an old-age pensioner living in a council flat and although the monk still gave occasional extra-mural lectures at London University, their thirst exceeded the capacity of their incomes to quench it so the wily Wyn was forever scheming ways to secure supplies, her hopes of milking, if that is the word, Mrs Muriel Hicks and her sister Freda having come to little more than such things as an exchange of Christmas cards with possibly the odd bottle of sherry for Wyn. Fortunately for Wyn, I enjoyed making my own wine and, settled with a constantly replenished glass in front of her, Wyn soon fell to such reminiscences as the instruction she received from Havelock Ellis on how to urinate standing up, a subject on which John Mortimer expatiates. It was Wyn who published Ellis's *The Revaluation of Obscenity* at the Hours Press.

But Wyn's monk had a fancy neither for my homemade elder-flower nor for my Vatican-sage brews. This parlous state continued until the day when leaving me behind at the BBC to do a late broadcast, Bertie Rodgers went home to my flat with MacNeice. My brother-in-law John Hicks had at that time, and still does have, connections with a brewery which specialises in strong ales. Behaving like Goldilocks over the bears' porridge, Bertie sampled a can and was so struck by its potency that he phoned Wyn who brought her monk along too so that they had gone through most of the supply

by the time I came home and threw them out. If Wyn and the monk were angry, I think John Hicks probably felt relieved when he with my sister and their five children left Ealing for Bournemouth from where, of course, it was impossible for him to deliver my ever-growing orders for the special brew at cheap rates from the brewery.

If Havelock Ellis called Wyn Henderson 'dangerous' Anthony Blunt knew what a dangerous combination Wyn and equally hard-drinking neighbour Princess Carlos de Rohan made. If the princess had no interest in black lovers in Paris, she and Wyn were pastmasters at blackmail in London.

Dil de Rohan was born Dilkusha Wrench, the daughter of a British major serving in India and his American wife, an oil heiress. She was called Dilkusha, Hindustani for Heart's Delight, because she saw first light in the Lucknow palace of that name. She was born on a Sunday but the real year of her birth cannot be traced since she was not registered at Somerset House. They returned to London in time for Dil, as the young daughter liked to be called, to see the gas light illuminations celebrating the end of the Boer War. In a manner worthy of his military rank, Dil's father kidnapped her, following divorce from her mother, and this most exciting of her childhood adventures meant that the name Dilkusha Wrench was first splashed across newspapers in this dramatic way.

After her mother made over their English home in the First World War to the Red Cross, Dil had been brought up by Lord Ernest Hamilton, the Ulster MP and author of such books as *The Soul of Ulster*, *Elizabethan Ulster*, *The Outlaws of the Marches* and others with Ulster backgrounds. The Duke of Abercorn's Co Tyrone home, Baronscourt, provided the parental background and Dil loved being taken on holidays with her two foster sisters, Brenda and Jean Hamilton, to stay there when they would visit all their Big House neighbours such as Blessingbourne, so that in the 1960s when Hugh and Peter Montgomery met Dil at my home she found herself among old friends. By that time her only brother, John Wrench, had married the sister of the Ulster politician and Grand Master of the Orange Order, Sir George Clark, so the peace talks, which often took place at my home, between Irish Nationalists and Ulster Unionists, greatly concerned Dil as well as featuring in many of Hugh Montgomery's letters to the Holy Father in Rome.

I got to know Dil's life story intimately because she wrote an autobiography which I typed several times following publishers' demands for libel and official secrets surgery, for in 1949 it was impossible for her to reveal details of her war work as head of Swiss affairs at the Ministry of Information where I first met her. She called her book *How Do You Do?* after her friend Gertrude Stein's piece, 'How do you do? I forgive you everything and there is nothing to forgive.'

Alas, Dil was not a forgiving person, especially when she saw friends such as me getting commissions to write books, for even with all Wyn Henderson's influence amongst publishers, Dil's autobiography remained in manuscript form. It did the rounds over many years and as late as 1985 a copy arrived for me from BBC Television in connection with a projected serial on the life and times of Anthony Blunt. I was hardly surprised, because the former head of BBC Television, Robert MacDermot, had been Dil's friend as well as mine, and his still-living wife, Diana Morgan, wrote so many TV serials such as the highly popular *Emergency Ward Ten* which Dil avidly viewed.

On 27 November 1964, Dil wrote to me from Spain about Bobbie MacDermot's death, 'My sweet Robin, You cannot imagine the anguish of the past week. I read about Bobbie on Monday evening when the Daily Express arrived. I howled like a dog and still do. That lovely, lovely Bobbie, that gentle giant, Poor Poor Diana....She's got that bloody thyroid and I fear for her health. If I only had an ounce of strength I would be with her. I was with her when her mother died. They were thinking of driving my little car out there, spending Christmas with me and flying back. When I think of two people as sweet as Bobbie and Tomas Harris dying this year and someone like my brother left on earth to torment and hurt.'

Bobby MacDermot was, like his friends at the BBC, Louis MacNeice and W R Rodgers, an important link in the behind-the-scenes peace feelers. I sent Dil a cutting from *The Times* which said, 'Robert MacDermot whom Balliol first knew as Bobby Barbour began with the rare combination of personal beauty, charm so natural that self-cultivation could add little to it, wit, and goodness of heart...He was, in the phrase of the title of a fellow-Ulsterman's novel, "the wayward man". Although for some 10 years he held important administrative posts in the BBC or the film world, the steady upward climb was not for him, he could have achieved it, but it was alien to him. A freebooter, a gentleman of fortune (and sometimes of ill-fortune), he gladly turned to "personal appearance" on radio or television... But he was at his talent's high peak in that brilliant collaboration with his wife, Diana Morgan, which gave us such revues as *The Gate Revue* or *Swinging the Gate*...their like has not appeared since.'

Whenever Dil was in the throes of playing her own favourite revue as Princess Carlos de Rohan to strangers and they asked about her Hindu forename, she would answer in her best Serene Highness voice, 'After the Dilkusha Palace in Lucknow where I was born on the Sabbath Day.' Bobbie MacDermot felt equally proud of his Ulster background and named his son Derry after the most divided of Ulster towns, a division he hoped Sir George Clark and Senator Jerry Lennon would help to heal. My mother never let me

forget that it was at the linen mill owned by Bobbie's family that she started work at the twelve years of age, spinning from six at morning to six at night for four shillings a week.

After all her efforts over the autobiography that nobody could or would publish, Dil saw only one reference in print to her war work and that was in the book on Morocco which Fabers commissioned me to write in 1964, by which time Guy Burgess had died in Moscow far from the bar in Tangier where he would sing, 'Little boys are cheap today, Cheaper than yesterday.'

How Do You Do's final draft remained untyped, so it is in Dil's handwriting that she tells of her last meeting with Guy Burgess before he fled to Russia. Dil's story was much too dangerous for publication in Blunt's lifetime and after he died a spy-catching author came to see me about Dil's circle and he promptly got a writ from another source. As I made clear to instructing solicitors, I thought that the writ was justified because the author, like others before him, had wrongly assumed that books published earlier had contained the truth about my role in Dil's life from 1944 to 1965, when the police returned to her flat for a final showdown. BBC Television have given me written assurance that all the tape-recorded evidence they obtained from me about the Blunt serial project has been scrapped, as has the serial itself amid press speculation.

Like so many rich American mothers, the oil heiress Mrs Wrench wanted her only daughter to get a title to match her fortune and connections with Lord Ernest Hamilton and soon Dilkusha was leaving the family home in Cadogan Square to marry Prince Carlos de Rohan at the nearby church of St Mary's. Because of his position in the de Rohan family, with their claims to various thrones, the Spanish and Austrian Ambassadors signed the register on behalf of Prince Carlos while for Dil Lord Ernest Hamilton signed with another politician/author, Sir George Leveson Gower who had started climbing his way in the Commons as Gladstone's secretary in 1880.

Of the honeymoon Dil writes, 'Because of my feverish cold we spent the first few nights at Claridges. I remember the orchestra downstairs busily playing 'The Limehouse Blues' as we struggled with the assortment of contraceptives Carlos had bought. I had never seen one and was alarmed and disgusted by them. Then Carlos slept and slept and slept. I lay miserable, hurt and bewildered at his side...I was still worried and unhappy at so hating "the Act" and imagined there must be something wrong with me. How was I to know that I was the first and possibly the last woman with whom Carlos ever slept.'

Dil went off to live with her prince in 1922 at Herkules Haus overlooking the Herkules Bridge in Berlin from which the frenzied crowd had thrown the body of Rosa Luxemburg, the Marxist author and politician, when

the Communist uprising was suppressed in 1919. Coming back from the Passion Play at Oberammergau one year Dil and Carlos stopped off in Munich and met one of the arch-dukes who insisted on introducing them to a brilliant new leader called Hitler. He was going to do everything for Austria, such as restoring the Arch-Duke Otto as emperor. As Prince Carlos de Rohan's aunt was the Duchess of Madrid, widow of Don Carlos, the Spanish Pretender, Hitler promised young Prince Carlos all sorts of things too if he joined the new political party. In no time at all the arch-duke and Prince Carlos became **Haken-kreutzers** and were sporting swastikas on their lapels.

Also in Herkules Haus lived the great Russian ballerina Karrali and her lover Shisken who had scandalised pre-Revolution society in Moscow by stealing someone's white horse and after dyeing it black, going on to win a major trotting prize. In this way Princess Carlos de Rohan met the great love of her life, Katusha, otherwise Catherine Devilliers. Katusha had escaped with her diamonds hidden in a hay-wagon during the Revolution. By the time she reached Warsaw she had almost been bitten to death by harvester bugs. She contacted Diaghilev and for the next couple of years danced in his company all over Europe in **Scheherezade**, **Bouffon** and **Tamar**. She became especially famous for the taxing role of the Miller's Wife in de Falla's **Three-Cornered Hat** designed by Picasso.

When various spy-book authors interviewed me over the years I always tried to impress on them who in Blunt's world was of importance to the Russians, in particular, Katusha. But she was dismissed merely as the 'Russian ballerina Katusha' who lived with Dil, nothing more. Yet had the authors troubled to look up Katusha's obituary in The Times of 19 January 1959 they would have read of her tremendous prestige in Russian eyes right up to her death, 'Madame Catherine Devilliers, who died in London on Thursday, was one of the great teachers of character dancing in Europe and continued to work at the Royal Academy of Dancing in London until shortly before her last illness.

Mme. Devilliers, who came of a distinguished Franco-Russian theatrical family, graduated from the Bolshoi Theatre School in 1908 and in a short time rose to the high position of one of the four ballerinas of the Bolshoi...During the summer closure of the Bolshoi she toured abroad with Anna Pavlova. After the Russian revolution she came to England, where Diaghilev engaged her immediately. Her outstanding role was that of the miller's wife in **The Three-Cornered Hat** which she danced before the King of Spain. After her association with Diaghilev she worked both in Berlin, where she had a studio, and in Paris...She then came to London again, where during the war she choreographed the Russian dances and the Ballet "Night on a Bare Mountain" in Moussorgsky's opera **Fair of Sorotchintsy** at the Savoy Theatre in

1942... When the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet came to London in 1956 the whole company paid tribute to Mme. Devilliers.'

Although the whole Bolshoi Theatre Ballet company's tribute was a magnificent gesture, I can think of nobody more feted by the Russian Embassy in London during the years I knew her. Blunt and Burgess hated and distrusted the snobbish Dil but adored Katusha and so did I for she was no less a character off the stage than on it.

Mrs Wrench was outraged when her daughter Dil left Prince Carlos in order to live with and become a designer to Katusha's ballet school in Berlin. If Dil had parted with her prince, it was not the end of her association with leading members of the Nazi Party. From 1931 Dil and Katusha motored over regularly to visit their friend Sir Francis Rose at the Bad Wiessee house he shared with Ernst Röhm, Chief of Staff of the SA. Hitler knew the importance of the English painter in Röhm's life and gave Rose the highest honours and uniformed out-riders to accompany Rose's car to the big Nazi rallies.

Francis Rose in his 1961 autobiography, **Saying Life**, tells of his life at Bad Wiessee with Ernst Röhm, and 'Prince Yussupov was then the most interesting personality of the after 1914-18 period. Apart from being the supposed murderer of the monk Rasputin he was the most spectacular personality of a small group of men whom, today, most people think made a cult of leisure. This group consisted of virile men to whom charm and good manners were essential. They seem to have kept a perpetual youth and beauty; of those alive today, Viscount Churchill is the best example: he still can leap over a sofa with a Fred Astaire agility and makes me feel old at fifty when he is seventy. I must now say their portraits. Lord Louis Mountbatten was the most subdued... Evan Tredegar, and Peter Spencer Churchill, were frankly wild like Elizabethan seigneurs and seamen such as Drake and Raleigh; I loved them both.'

Peter Churchill was over eighty and remarkably agile when Sir Goerge Terry's Sussex Police came to the house I shared with Peter, to interview us about the twelve year old boy murdered near the church where I had seen Evan Tredegar and Francis Rose celebrate the black mass in 1944. By then the Deputy Führer, Rudolf Hess, had made his historic flight to the Duke of Hamilton in Scotland before being interned in Maindiff Court in Monmouthshire of which county his friend from Bad Wiessee days, Evan Tredegar, was Deputy Lieutenant. It was on the 9 September 1933 that Deputy Führer Hess had ordered all Party leaders to stop the lavish diplomatic receptions. But with the celebrated English painter, Sir Francis Rose at the other end of the long table, Ernst Röhm continued to outdo even the Foreign Ministry gala dinner parties with those at Bad Wiessee. When Evan Tredegar and Peter Churchill appeared with after-dinner black magic entertainment,

Francis Rose felt in his element. One of the Nazi leaders who did not like what Röhm and his English friends were doing at the Bad Wiessee house was Goebbels.

In **The Goebbels Diaries** the German side of this tale is presented, 'I point out to the Führer at length that in 1934 we unfortunately failed to reform the Wehrmacht when we had an opportunity of doing so. What Röhm wanted was, of course, right in itself but in practice it could not be carried through by a homosexual and an anarchist. Had Röhm been an upright solid personality, in all probability some hundred generals rather than some hundred SA leaders would have been shot on 30 June. The whole course of events was profoundly tragic and today we are feeling its effect. In that year the time was ripe to revolutionise the Reichswehr.'

After learning that his lover had been shot in the Röhm Putsch Francis Rose returned to Hitler the Nazi decorations and went back to living in Paris where Gertrude Stein engaged him on illustrating her books. Meanwhile at Katusha's ballet school in Berlin there were soon serious money problems as Dil wrote, 'The first crack came in the middle of a dinner party. I was rung up by the Saint Phallae Company advising me to go to their offices at once, there had been a serious crash on Wall Street... Everyone we knew in America was more or less wiped out, Saint Phallae and Company, mother, John, the Guthries, Uncle Sam Insull and all.' From being a rich woman with prospects of being an even richer one on her mother's death, Dil and Katusha could not afford to keep such a large establishment in Berlin and followed Francis Rose to Paris.

By the time the libel lawyers had finished with **How Do You Do?** it had shrunk to half its size and in 1958 I suggested she add her letters from Alice B Toklas. By then Alice had written her famous cook book including some of Dil's recipes. But my suggestion did not please the solicitors since Alice always had something to say about Francis Rose's private life, such as the letter of 7 May 1955, 'Dear Dilkusha dear, La Sprigge was here for three days. I saw her once for three hours in which she told me that they were printing twenty thousand of her Strindberg translation and that her book on Gertrude would be ready for the end of the year. She did not say she would show me the manuscript so I wash my hands of her end of it. She returns in July to see the big Picasso show. She wants to see him and Thornton - proposes to follow him to Edinburgh - but they each know how to protect themselves. Francis had a stormy interview with her in which he came out on top. He is a reformed character - sober - hard working and no indiscretions. There is a young American in the background but it is not an affair. Can you believe it - I do... A letter to Mary Oliver this morning and my time today will have been spent in the best of company. Keep improving - Dilkuska dear - or you'll disappoint,

Yours fondly Alice.'

Evan Tredegar and his circle had been outraged by the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer film about their friend Prince Yussupov and the murder of Rasputin. They urged the prince to sue for misrepresentation and the resultant victory set off a campaign which turned most of the group into litigants, including Francis Rose who had very grand ideas about his person. Rose wrote, 'Father would not allow anyone to kiss me but himself, Mother, and Granny. Others might kiss only my hand. I got in the habit of extending my hand out of my pram, and this amused my godfather, King Alfonso XIII, very much.'

The Francis Rose I knew is accurately described by the former seaman-turned-model April Ashley who had interests in a restaurant to which she invited Rose for free meals because he was by then 'grubby and poor.' One night the restaurant was full and April Ashley put the painter on a stool by the bar. After eating his fill Rose stormed at April in view of the large crowd, 'How dare you put me at the bar. Don't you realise I'm the Fourth Baronet! My mother was the daughter of a French count!' She hit him. Listening to this was Lord Antrim, who remarked to April Ashley, 'You've just done what I've been longing to do ever since I was at school with him.'

In Paris, however, Francis Rose was known as the protege of Gertrude Stein and Picasso thought sufficiently highly of him as an artist as to sit for his own portrait by Rose. But just as Paris talked of the great Lord Tredegar as a great master of the black mass, Paris remembered Rose's French mother as another famous communicator with the dead. Lady Rose lived at the Hotel Welcome in Villefranche where she seemed to glide through the gardens like a ghost herself, dressed in a long sailcloth gown painted with roses by her son who showed talent at a very early age. Indeed so famous was he as a teenager that Jean Cocteau was called in to organise Francis's seventeenth birthday party. Isadora Duncan was invited to dance but the chief entertainment took place by accident when a fight broke out between the French and American sailors and Lady Rose fought off her attacker armed with a large lobster.

The reference to 'La Sprigge' in Alice B Toklas's letter concerned Elizabeth Sprigge, a theatre director as well as a novelist and biographer much involved with Jean Cocteau and Francis Rose and who, of course, had a history of quarreling with Dil that went back to the days at the Ministry of Information when La Sprigge ran the Swedish desk and ran off with one of Dil's girlfriends. Cocteau had published Sprigge's biography of their beloved Gertrude Stein and in 1963 her life of Cocteau had just come out in London. Having known T S Eliot and Ezra Pound in the 1920s and 30s Sprigge had naturally wanted to meet Charles Monteith as Eliot's literary successor at Faber and Faber, a meeting which had gone well because Dil was wintering

in Spain. But Mary Oliver was not abroad and Dil soon learned of what she regarded as my treason by having the hated La Sprigge in my home. When Alice B Toklas wrote to Dil 'A letter to Mary Oliver this morning and my time will have been spent in the best of company' she summed up the situation as I knew it. Dil's own letters to me are full of references to Alice and Mary Oliver, and occasionally because of legal problems Dil would send me Mary's letters to deal with lawyers.

At that time in the 1960s a Dr Jacob Schwartz from New York used to plague the life out of authors in attempts to buy their letters and typescripts. He also had an odd interest in old family Bibles. I once had to eject him from my home after he got Peter Churchill to lend him my key. Peter had introduced Schwartz to the Irish actress Anita Sharp-Bolster, who became Mrs Schwartz and his partner in getting first editions of books published by T S Eliot's firm of Faber and Faber. He knew I spent some evenings playing cards with James Hanley, and when I got home to my flat one day I found Schwartz had taken down whole shelf-fuls of books searching for the all-important authors' signatures, especially James Hanley's. Copies of Hanley's *Boy* did, and do, fetch colossal sums. Dil knew the value of the letters she got from Alice B Toklas, and preferred to sell them to the highest bidder at Christies, after I had typed copies of them, since there were no photocopying machines in those days. Twenty years later the spy-catchers would research American university libraries and want interviews about what happened in the Ministry of Information which was Dil's heyday and when I met the head of Swiss affairs.

Dil was to spend much time in Paris with Mary Oliver and Alice B Toklas, but in fact Dil first met Mary in London. The French company she ran, 'Dilkuska S.A.R.L. of Paris' wanted a branch in London and Dil wrote, 'A company was formed with Yvonne Rodd, Nancy Mitford and myself as directors... one morning as we were taking our aperitif we were joined by a beautiful young woman who greeted us, sat down and ordered champagne. I could not take my eyes from her. I had never seen any human more beautiful. I thought, there is an image which will be destroyed by an image. She looked at me her eyes alight with fun and said, "To see Dilly is to dally." "Who is it?" I whispered to Katusha. "You should know, Mrs Jock Oliver, she's one of your best clients" she said. "Then why is she wearing a Balenciage dress?"'

The beautiful Mary Oliver was soon seeing more of Dil than her husband, and one day while lunching together a secretary came to Mary and announced that Jock Oliver had met with a fatal accident. Dil wrote, 'During the days while he lay dying at their home, Pembroke Lodge in Richmond Park, we very often went to see them. Poor Jock. So young and rich and elegant and sufficiently intelligent to have been President of POP while at

Eton. He was buried at Jedburgh their Scottish estate, Mary, such a young widow, turned to us for comfort and support and this we gladly gave her. As an American we thought the best thing to do was go for a change to New York. I have spent many moments with Mary... angry ones... happy ones, enlightening ones. But never a dull one. Once I said to her "Mary you don't think you are Schizophrenic do you?" She replied, "Just a pioneer, my dear, just a pioneer." She had studied Freud and had read esoteric philosophy with Ouspensky and Gurdjieff. To Gurdjieff she bore a striking physical resemblance and to see them dining at the same table was remarkably interesting.'

Dil needed no reminding that she had more enemies than friends and that her enemies, who usually had once been her friends, dismissed her as an arch-snob whose family fortune in oil had made her more than a little oily in human dealings. She never forgot or liked others to forget her birth as the granddaughter of Standard Oil's President and although the fortune, like her relationship with the homosexual Prince Carlos, had ended she still had the right to insist that the British car-licence authorities issue her with a windscreen sticker clearly labelled 'Her Serene Highness Princess Carlos de Rohan,' which seemed no mean feat considering how small the circular disc was for the little green van bought for her by my friend Enriqueta Harris who had been head of Spanish affairs, at the Ministry of Information.

Snobbery is the lingua franca equally of those who are elite as of those aspiring to be elite. Dil's fell somewhere in between for although she aspired to recognition as a writer and had failed, she nevertheless consorted with elite American-born cosmopolitans in London and Paris such as Gertrude Stein, Alice B Toklas, Ezra Pound, Mary Oliver, T S Eliot and Ernest Hemingway.

Knowing how Dil deliberately looked out for offence to her dignity, I sent her the manuscript of the short piece in my Morocco book in which I referred to her wartime agents there. With an outraged blast she informed me that she had been in Tangier many years before 'that lot swamped the place with Coca-cola.' So I meekly added in my book that Dil 'had known Tangier since the early thirties.'

T S Eliot was not the only American to become a Faber director and the Faber stationery also bore the name of his friend from Ohio, Morley Kennerley plus the suffix (U.S.A.). Before contracts could be drawn up for my commissioned books, Morley Kennerley had to approve each commission and usually we chatted about the places I was going to visit. But despite the (U.S.A.) after his name, Morley's bowler hat and Bentley cars transformed every inch of his tall, immaculately dressed figure into a City Gent. His friend Barbara Hutton owned the exotic Sidi Hosni Palace in the Kasbah at Tangier where drag parties took place to accommodate the tastes of Barbara's cousin and co-heir to the Woolworth fortune, Jimmy Donahue. Jimmy's behaviour

fascinated Guy Burgess and me and we were both in New York during 1950 when the international gossip columnists reported Jimmy's affair with the Duchess of Windsor who much enjoyed being referred to by the gay community as 'The Queen of the Fairies!'

The former King of England, however, could hardly have been amused when Jimmy told the waiting reporters that the duchess was 'Marvellous. The best cocksucker I've ever known!' Both Dil de Rohan and Nancy Cunard affected this kind of language to shock people and as both had danced in the former king's arms when he starred as the Prince of Wales at Lady Cunard's ballroom, they relished all the subsequent scandals. It was not until 1954 that Jimmy broke with the Duchess of Windsor and introduced the new man in his life as 'The boy who took the boy who took the girl who took the boy off the throne of Merry Old England.'

In 1966 Jimmy died suddenly in New York while still only fifty-one and rumour spread that he was the victim of a black mass conducted by fellow gays who sent his mutilated body in a black trunk to his mother. Certainly enough **tseuheur** packets had been sent to Jimmy by disappointed young Moroccans who thought themselves set up for life in the Sidi Hosni Palace only to find that they were not even one night stands. The **tseuheur** black magic packets containing blood, semen, fingernails, excrement and pubic hair, served much the same purpose as those parcels sent by British doctors to Nye Bevan when he set up the National Health service.

The disappointed Arab boys knew that Barbara Hutton handed out cheques for sums like \$3 million when she wanted to get rid of lovers whom she had already well-endowed on starting the affairs. In 1950, Jimmy had inherited another trust fund, this time for \$15 million so he was far from Barbara's poor relation. The largest amount that he, or rather his family, was forced to pay out of which I am aware shows both Jimmy's attitude and what money can do to cover-up. I had been introduced to the Stork Club and other famous New York night clubs by Jerry Golden, whose family I stayed with in Allentown. Truman Capote tells of the night at Cerutti's gay bar on Madison Avenue where Jimmy picked up servicemen to take home, 'One of the servicemen passed out in the middle of the party. They put him on a couch and took off his pants and then got out the shaving cream and a sharp razor and they were shaving off his pubic hair. They thought it was hilarious. They were all drunk and stoned. He came to in the middle of it and somebody accidentally cut off his prick.. When that happened there was a great panic and they wrapped this guy up in a blanket and put him in Jimmy's car and dumped him somewhere on the Fifty-ninth Street Bridge. When the police found him he was in shock. They got him to hospital and managed to save his life.'

This typified the scandals that followed Jimmy Donahue and people

knew his mother had given the serviceman \$200,000 not to press charges. She also let it be known through her lawyers that she would sue for libel if any newspaper reported this incident, one in a long chain that had followed the heirs of the Woolworth Stores' founder. Little wonder the same fond mother, Mrs Jessie Donahue, may well have had her mutilated son's body sent to her in a black trunk by the outraged gay community.

Peter Churchill and his brother-in-law, the film maker John Huston, were well known in New York's theatrical circles. But Peter was no stranger in Tangier either. He had known North Africa from boyhood when he learnt Arabic, and he owned a restaurant outside Tangier at the time Barbara Hutton and Jimmy Donahue were giving their famous drag parties at the Sidi Hosni Palace. But Peter broke off his long friendship with Barbara and Jimmy and came to share my home in Sussex when Barbara got Peter to take a suitcase to New York. With a British passport in the name of Lord Churchill, Peter was unlikely to have his luggage searched by customs officials so Barbara used him to take into the U.S the drugs she could not live without.

London society professed itself shocked in 1916 when Peter's mother, the Lord Chamberlain's wife, left the family home to set up house with her female lover who was her 'Spiritual Director' in the black arts. Peter's mother made matters worse by persuading him to marry the woman in an attempt to make their lesbian affair appear normal. The new Viscountess Churchill held seances with Dil de Rohan and Mary Oliver before committing suicide when Peter's mother died.

I had first discussed the possibility of a Morocco book in 1960 when T S Eliot and his new wife returned from Tangier and told me about our mutual friend Robin Maugham being caught in the Agadir earthquake. Maugham too delighted in the black magic powers of his friends. But much of Maugham's many stories of murdered friends and enemies that got into the press, could easily have resulted from the 'open snobbishness, success worship, personal vendettas, unprovoked malice, disloyalty to friends' that Maurice Bowra preached at Oxford, according to Anthony Powell, the novelist. Lord Annan has written that Maurice Bowra 'both envied and feared the Warden of All Souls' reckless propensity to say or do anything.' Over the years I have had much to say of Warden Sparrow's propensity on many subjects, which he did not like. Bowra's particular friend, Cyril Connolly, who had his *Horizon* magazine in the same building where Dil lived, wrote of his Oxford days as 'Most of us are resigned to the doctrines of homosexuals, that they alone possess all the greatest heroes and all the finer feelings,' This rubbish did not turn Sir Maurice Bowra into a genius like Erasmus or Michelangelo.

Meanwhile Sparrow's friend and Sub-Warden at All Souls, Charles

Monteith, was writing me letters of introduction for the book on Morocco he had commissioned for Fabers. Unfortunately, by the time Fabers published the book in 1965, the police were interviewing Dil de Rohan and discussing all sorts of serious crimes that went back to the Wall Street crash of 1929 when she had nothing to live on except her wits. But what wits! Would she outwit Anthony Blunt whose immunity secret she already knew about? Or would the need to maintain the secrecy of Blunt's immunity entail the covering-up of some, if not all, of Dil's crimes?

Barbara Hutton came to London during 1965 to spend \$400,000 on a 48-carat diamond. But it was Mary Oliver who had the inspired idea that their friend Barbara Hutton should rescue Dil from her financial plight and criminal investigation, since some of the disputed jewels and pictures Dil was said to have stolen ended up at Barbara's place in Morocco, the Sidi Hosni Palace. Mary Oliver had a son, John Willis, who had procured more than servicemen for Barbara's cousin Jimmy Donahue, because John operated as a picture dealer on a regular route between London and New York, Paris and the Arab flesh-market of Tangier.

After the serviceman had his penis cut off, Jessie Donahue chartered a plane to take son Jimmy and his accomplices in the crime to a hide-out in Mexico. John Willis joined them there for a time and was doubtless much appreciated, for like Jimmy, John looked splendid in drag, but they both preferred to shed false bosoms and high heels and dance naked on top of bar counters. Then John got badly knifed in a bar fight, and although not as severely as the wretched serviceman, yet enough to demand a reasonable settlement before returning to London. Mary Oliver in 1965 thought that it would be useful to remind Jimmy Donahue or Barbara Hutton of old scores.

Morley Kennerley's wife Jean told Barbara Hutton's biographer, David Heymann, 'People perpetually warned me that Barbara Hutton would try to take away my husband. I didn't believe it. Morley and Barbara were like brother and sister. The truth of the matter is that Barbara did try to seduce Morley. It took place years later...' The year was in fact 1965 when Barbara was in London and although accompanied by her seventh husband, Raymond Doan, she made a disastrous pass at Morley Kennerley so no complimentary copy of my book on Morocco went to the Sidi Hosni Palace. Dil de Rohan and Mary Oliver were delighted since they made quite a cult of Maurice Bowra's 'unprovoked malice and personal vendettas.'

Dil had heard that Barbara Hutton gave the Kennerleys a million dollars on their silver wedding anniversary, but when David Heymann published his book in 1985, Jean Kennerley is reported as saying it was only \$25,000. This is typical of Dil's exaggeration which did not make things easy for the criminal investigation into her activities. On 22 June 1965 Dil wrote

to me, 'The police officer you spoke to was No. 303. She and the two detectives have read all your correspondence. All were from Gray's Inn Road. "Reliable" Robin I always called you. With Love and forgive whatever I may have said to make you in such a state. Dil.'

The police read that on 3 June 1965 I had written to Dil, 'And it was not "typical Jewish meanness" that kept Enri and her car from London Airport on Saturday. She is a busy working woman.. And talking of Enri reminds me of something I asked you not to do before your departure for Spain, NOT to talk about Erica Marx, her former friends and vast fortunes. Imagine my surprise when I saw a letter of yours to Enri stating that Anna was going to underwrite you a sum at the bank as she lived with Erica who was "stinking rich with two million alone from her father." John Willis may well have been the pimp and swindler that you so emphasised, but he had enough sense NOT to make such a dangerous move as to go and collect National Assistance in your name while you pranced in Spain.'

Many of Dil's friends are still alive, including her wartime colleague, Enri Harris, the art historian, and Anna Pollak, the opera singer. To check on some points I sent them copies of letters Dil wrote to me in which she mentioned them. On 1 November 1989 Anna Pollak replied, 'Thank you very much for your interesting long letter & enclosures (Strange to see Dil's writing again!). If all this is to be published I am sure that you will watch over it as you feel such loyalty & affection for Krishna & Erica. I may have given Dil the odd pound when she was "low" & I remember taking her food when she was ill but I certainly never promised to underwrite her. I have never underwritten anyone in my life! Erica didn't tolerate scroungers tho' I'm afraid she had rather a lot of them to deal with. Further to what I told you on the phone about Hermann Marx: he left a million to his wife and four children. He was a distinguished antiquarian book expert and also a brilliant financier, coming to England penniless after the first war and steering Gulbenkian towards his fortune in Celenese. Of course I knew Krishna started the Pelicans & still have some of them here along with a box full of letters, photos of those far-off revolutionary days. I much appreciate your affection & admiration for Krishna & Erica - & your loyalty to their memory.'

So just as the Kennerleys' one million dollars fell to \$25,000, so Erica Marx, the publisher, inherited only a fifth of one million pounds. I also admired the other publisher, Krishna Menon, for he founded Pelican Books that published two books by friends of mine, Enri Harris's husband Henri Frankfort, former director of the Warburg Institute, and Anthony Blunt, who had worked at the Warburg before going as director to the Courtauld.

Krishna Menon, a Middle Temple lawyer, dedicated his life to achieving Indian freedom from British rule and to socialism, but the major role he

played in founding the India League was the activity which drew Anthony Blunt, Anna Pollak and me to him. Menon's disciple, Jawaharlal Nehru, became the first Prime Minister of free India and had the famous long affair with Lady Edwina Mountbatten which her biographer, Richard Hough, described as 'one of the great love affairs of history.' Dil, born in and named after the Dilkusha Palace in Lucknow, would certainly have agreed with Hough reporting that although Edwina had become mistress of a palace with 7,000 servants and the richest woman in the country, she remained 'a spoilt Jewish playgirl of the India Civil Service.' Dil's anti-semitism added a sharper cutting edge to the personal vendettas.

By the time Krishna Menon started the India Club after the Second World War Blunt had come to prefer the much grander Travellers Club presided over by Sir Gilbert Laithwaite. From 1936 to 1943 Laithwaite was private secretary to the Viceroy of India, the Marquess of Linlithgow. But such a powerful influence did Gilbert have on the sub-continent that this period was called 'the Linlithwaite era.' When he died in 1986 aged 92 the **Daily Telegraph** said, 'Sir Gilbert Laithwaite was the first Ambassador to the new Republic of Ireland from 1950 to 1951, and Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations from 1955 to 1959. An immaculate pro-consular figure, never without a red carnation, Sir Gilbert had an engaging friendly personality and old-world manners...'

Many of Dil's neighbours had been moved out because their landlord, London University, had built an extensive Indian hostel and planned to extend it by demolishing the Georgian terrace in which Dil lived. Many Indian statesmen visited the Brunswick Square hostel, usually accompanied by Gilbert Laithwaite. Dil and I first encountered him during the war when he was Under-Secretary of the War Cabinet and on particularly good terms with Dil's boss, Brendan Bracken, the Minister of Information. Dil was a mine of unpublished and, as yet, unpublishable information, and knew that Gilbert had been ambassador in Ireland and therefore thought it only natural that he and his friend Hugh Montgomery should come to my home to talk about the Unionist-Nationalist talks on Ulster unity. But she also thought it natural that she could lean out of her top floor window and hurl abuse at Gilbert when, on going to or coming from my flat, or the Indian hostel, he passed in the street below. She would have done in any case, but now, with her back against the wall and faced with homelessness because of the planned hostel extension for which she held Gilbert partly responsible, she felt more than usually justified in reminding Gilbert that she knew perfectly well what went on in the gents lavatory below with the taxi-drivers because, of course, Gilbert, the 'immaculate pro-consular' Tory toff frequented the lavatory for the same purpose as Tom Driberg, the Labour MP who looked like and talked like a bishop. Dil's sauce

was as good for the goose as the gander.

But if Gilbert lent his name to the period of the raj known as the 'Linlithwaite era', Dil and many others thought of the early 1960s as the 'Stephen Ward era.' Some of Gilbert's friends could be as outrageous as Dil de Rohan and Mary Oliver. One such was Bobbie Shaw, the son of Lady Nancy Astor by her first marriage. Christopher Sykes knew the Astor family well and when he wrote a biography of Nancy he was his usual honest self in opening doors of cupboards to reveal the skeletons within. He wrote of Bobbie Shaw as 'a cynic and secret debauchee.'

Unfortunately, poor Bobbie did not keep his debauchery secret enough and that led to his downfall. When alcohol got the better of him, which was pretty often, Bobbie loved to tell how, when he was a boy, the famous Lord Kitchener introduced him to gay practices and that the accusing finger of the First World War recruiting poster 'Your Country Needs You' had a special meaning for Bobbie. All his mother's teaching about the evils of drinking, and the regular attendance at the Christian Science Church did not stop Bobbie's need for drink and sex. In 1929 the Royal Horse Guards found him drunk on duty and forced him out while two years later the law forced him into prison after being caught in an act of homosexuality. Bobbie's first attempt at suicide followed soon afterwards. Even so, Bobbie's track-record for promiscuity probably did not match that of his friend Gilbert Laithwaite.

Gilbert genuinely liked Bobbie Shaw and tried to keep the uneasy peace between Bobby and his mother both of whom were known for their public outbursts and startling language. But Gilbert's immaculate pro-consular style was better suited to weekends at Cliveden with Bobbie's step-brother, Lord 'Bill' Astor who entertained the internationally famous. Stephen Ward, the fashionable osteopath and successful artist, not only became Bobbie's medical adviser but also his confidant for Stephen had a very sympathetic nature. Stephen had sat for a series of drawings by my acquaintance Frank Slater and they appeared as seven studies in Slater's book **Getting a Likeness**. Slater called Ward a 'volatile sitter' and wrote ten years before Stephen's death, of the difficulties of deciding about the model's character 'especially when he may be restless and has many changing expressions.'

Stephen Ward in turn sketched many of Dil's and Mary Oliver's friends including John Betjeman who wrote a poem called **In A Devonshire Street Waiting Room**. He went on to draw members of the royal family. Although, thankfully, I never actually saw it, I could well imagine Stephen manipulating Dil de Rohan or Winston Churchill on his consulting couch, but I could not for one moment imagine this delightful character selling the sexual services of Christine Keeler or Mandy Rice-Davis. Perhaps Frank Slater, in observing Stephen's volatility and restlessness, has glimpsed something of Ward's

'secret worlds' which Stephen Dorril wrote about in the **Honeytrap** biography of Ward.

I showed this author some old press clippings, including my review of John Mortimer's autobiography when I wrote about 'The last time I saw Wyn and the Princess in public they were fighting with the police over whether or not an author lodger had masterminded the attempt to blow up Mr Khrushchev's warship in English waters.' The would-be author was Francis Rose working on the latest draft of **Saying Life**, for like Dil's **How Do You Do?**, the libel lawyers would demand many changes. Anthony Blunt and his Russian masters gave considerable thought to Rose's and Dil's pre-war lives in Germany and the association with Röhm, while Blunt also took personal interest in their Paris association with Gertrude Stein and Picasso since Blunt would one day, with another of our mutual friends, Phoebe Pool, write a book on Picasso. But the presence of Dil and Francis Rose, scheming to regain something of their former life styles under the same roof in a house owned by London University of whose faculty Blunt was a senior member, perturbed the art historian. Dil and Rose were both dangerous people who knew too much about many things for Blunt's comfort, and both were now spurred on to get money by any means and, in the last resort, by blackmail.

For many years an ex-merchant seaman called Lionel Crabb acted as Rose's agent and strong-man, being known at that time in the 1930s as 'The Admiral' afterwards as 'Buster' Crabb when he won the George Cross in the Second World War. Alice B Toklas in her letter of 7 May 1955 to Dil when Elizabeth Sprigge was in Paris working on her Picasso book, states, 'Francis had a stormy interview with her in which he came out top.' This row paled beside the last stormy interview between Francis Rose, Dil de Rohan, Wyn Henderson and me before Special Branch. The Bolshoi Theatre Ballet came to London in 1956 and Dil, although being jealous, proudly played her role of princess as never before when the whole Russian company paid tribute in public to her beloved Katusha. They had been an affair for over thirty years and Dil cried openly with joy at this extraordinary acclamation of her partner. But Dil cried with rage when Special Branch turned up to question Francis Rose about what was being planned at Dil's flat in Selwyn House where for years Rose had a studio.

Rose and Buster Crabb were a well-known pair. I found Crabb with his insignia of sword-stick and monocle increasingly hard to take, nevertheless, I could not deny his hero-status position Rose wrote well about in **Saying Life**, since the fact remained that he had won the George Cross for his wartime undersea adventures against the powerful Italian navy. So after the war when Rose and Dil went off to Alice B Toklas and Picasso in Paris, I used to go to the pub with Crabb for old times's sake and on several occasions included

Stephen Ward in our outings. There seemed to me nothing politically significant behind Ward's interest in Crabb, but merely fascination with the ex-naval commander who was, in any case, a bit of a character known for blasting forth his hatred of the Russian leadership coup. In Francis Rose's absence in Paris, Crabb kept more than the painter's unsold canvases, of which there were many, under lock and key in Dil's flat since he had good reason to believe that John Willis would sell them for money to take his mother Mary Oliver and Katusha to the pub.

To read Rose's book *Saying Life* today is for me like listening to Buster Crabb in the 1940s entertaining the pub with titbits of Rose's early life which have since been used in biographies of Gertrude Stein and Cocteau. Russia was a favourite subject with both Crabb and Rose who wrote, 'When I was taken by Father and Mother to Cannes at the age of about two-and-a-half, to visit the Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia, Commander in Chief of the Tsar's armies, in his Florentine villa on the Croisette, I was carried to him in the arms of my nurse as that huge man was lying upon a chaise-longue with his leg in plaster after having fallen down in the Casino. He had a toy for me which it seems that I took and dropped upon the ground while extending my hand for him to kiss, which, amid peals of hearty laughter, he did. He turned towards his stiff and uniformed A.D.C. and gentlemen-in-waiting and ordered them to follow his example. My mother, it appears, was very cross, but Father, who knew Moscow and St. Petersburg well was delighted, and I am told that it is very Russian.'

The Grand Duke Nicholas's family had applauded the young Katusha as the rising star of the Bolshoi before the royal family was murdered in the Russian Revolution. Now the Communist leaders in 1956 had allowed the Bolshoi ballet to pay tribute to Buster Crabb's drinking-companion Katusha. Little wonder the police from Gray's Inn Road could make neither head nor tail of what had been happening at Selwyn House with Dil and Rose over the years.

More important visitors to London than the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet in 1956 were the Russian leaders themselves, Marshal Bulganin and Nikita Khrushchev. Peterborough in the *Daily Telegraph* later revealed Anthony Blunt's embarrassment at being asked to show the Russian leaders the Queen's pictures of which he was the surveyor. But Blunt felt more perturbed by what he knew Francis Rose and Buster Crabb were plotting at Selwyn House. Anthony Eden, the Prime Minister, had vetoed Crabb's intention of making an underwater inspection of the cruiser *Ordzhonikidze* which had brought the Russian leaders to England. Crabb, however, in defiance of Eden's veto, got the go-ahead from his old cronies in Naval Intelligence and that was the last we or anybody else saw of Commander Lionel Crabb G.C.

His disappearance only intensified the storm at Selwyn House.

Dil threw Francis Rose out and she would not allow him to take his pictures, neither those he painted himself nor those by his friends such as Picasso whose work Dil and Katusha had collected from the 1920s when Katusha was dancing with Diaghilev. Although Dil's book *How Do You Do?* contained many references to Francis Rose because it was written before Crabb's disappearance, there is no reciprocal mention of Dil in his book because when the final draft of *Saying Life* appeared in print, the bitter question of who owned what at Selwyn House was still in the hands of the lawyers.

The disappearance of Buster Crabb interested many people but few more than Stephen Ward whose interests were in turn monitored by both M16 and M15. Gilbert Laithwaite enjoyed sitting for his portrait by Stephen as well as having his well-proportioned body examined at the Devonshire Street couch. Gilbert had spent four years of his career in public service as British High Commissioner in Pakistan where I met many of his British and Pakistan staff when in 1957 I went to research my book on that country. No one appreciated Gilbert's 'immaculate pro-consular' appearance as much as the President of Pakistan, Field Marshal Ayub Khan. The field marshal was principal guest at Lord Astor's country house when John Profumo, the Minister of War, and his wife and other famous people went down to the swimming pool at Cliveden and found Christine Keeler naked. The women in tiaras could not compete. And so the Profumo affair started, and the Minister of War had an affair with the nineteen year old Christine Keeler while she concurrently bedded with the Soviet spy Eugene Ivanov. He only arrived at the Russian Embassy as Assistant Naval Attache in March 1960 and Katusha had died in January 1959, so Ivanov could not have been among the diplomats watching as young girls from the Royal Academy of Dancing curtsied at the coffin of their beloved teacher Katusha, or hear Bishop Anthony say farewell to one of London's most colourful characters.

It was Stephen Ward who brought Profumo and Ivanov and Christine Keeler together and it was Stephen Ward who went on trial. I went with Christopher Knight to the 21st birthday party of Evelyn Kane, whose step-father Sir Edward Beddington-Behrens I had first met in 1944 when he married Prince Serge Obolensky's daughter and played a colourful part in Evan Tredegar's set. Like Evan, Sir Edward did everything on the grand scale at his country home, Park House, near Dorking. Evelyn's party proved to be more populous than the Cliveden one at which Stephen Ward introduced the naked Christine Keeler to the Minister of War. But it had a large swimming pool and when I was drying myself I saw some hearties throw a girl into the deep end and I got her out and gave the kiss of life. Seeing her in danger, I had

not stopped to put clothes on so I was on top of the girl when the hidden press photographers decided to break cover and photograph us. The gentlemen of Fleet Street were also then thrown into the deep end, cameras and all. Not wanting to get involved in a lawsuit I got into Christopher Knight's car and he was about to drive away when a man in fancy dress as a medieval abortionist asked for a lift. We all went off in the open-topped car and the medieval abortionist got out near the Museum Gallery as he was mounting an exhibition of Stephen Ward's sketches.

The first day of Ward's trial was celebrated with a party in the Museum Gallery. At the Old Bailey Mr Justice Marshall told the jury that they had to answer three questions: 1. Were Keeler and Rice-Davies prostitutes? 2. Did Ward know they were? 3. Did he knowingly receive from them or others money for the introduction and facilities for sexual intercourse which he provided?

A reporter on the *France-Soir* put the whole thing in a nutshell, 'Monsieur Marshall is a puritan, and Ward the roué, the libertine, the cynic, appalled him...every time M. Justice Marshall explained to the jury the questions they would have to answer, his voice gave it away: M. Marshall did not like Ward, for he had brought a scandal upon England.' Sir Archibald Marshall may not have known from personal experience the world of Stephen Ward but his boss, Lord Chief Justice Parker, did via his encounter with myself and Gwen Le Gallienne.

I spent part of 1958 in Madeira writing a book about the island and on the way back to Britain I was joined by a friend, Cyril Harvey, who became a Bencher the same year as well as publishing *The Advocate's Devil* without the help of his old collaborator, A T Denning, better known as Lord Denning, Master of the Rolls who wrote the government's report on the Profumo affair. The airmail edition of *The Times* we read on the seaplane announced that Cyril Harvey's other legal colleague, Lord Parker, had become Lord Chief Justice. When we landed at Southampton Water Cyril wanted to send a congratulatory telegram and I added my name as a gesture of goodwill rather than from any great wish to do so.

Gwen Le Gallienne had recently come out of hospital and while painting me asked if I could help her to get paid commissions, since she was doing my portrait in return for many evenings of free drinking with Buster Crabb and Katusha. I passed on to Parker Gwen's press-cutting book with illustrations of her former sitters such as James Joyce, Ernest Hemingway, Emyln Williams. A press picture of the artist herself appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* of 12 March 1940, with this story, 'Miss Gwen Le Gallienne, daughter of Richard Le Gallienne, is off to Finland. She is going to make pictorial records of the war. On the Riviera, where she often stays with her

father at Menton, she was a pioneer in the dress that there has now become conventional - trousers, a short jacket and an open-necked shirt. For her present trip she has adopted as my picture shows, the uniform of the war girl. Miss Le Gallienne has had several shows in London, and she has been decorated for her work in Paris. She is a sensitive artist, with something of the wistfulness which made her father a leading minor poet of the nineties.'

The Lord Chief Justice faced considerable difficulty. Should he be painted by Gwen Le Gallienne or by her drinking companion Stephen Ward whose sketches of royal and other famous faces not only appeared in the better pages of the press but went on to show at exhibitions where Lord Parker might rub shoulders with other sitters such as Prince Philip or Princess Margaret? Ward had neither the time nor ability to produce in oils the stately portrait of Parker wearing flowing robes and wig as the Lord Chief Justice of England. So Gwen it had to be, although I had not warned Lord Parker that her style of dress and appearance had changed considerably since the *Daily Telegraph* photograph of 1940.

Because Oscar Wilde had so admired Richard Le Gallienne, the 'Golden Boy', as man and poet, Evan Tredegar figured in Gwen's Paris circle in the days when Nina Hamnett swanked around in Nancy Cunard's cast-off evening dresses and Wyn Henderson cast her eye at the Hours Press author Samuel Beckett whose *Whoroscope*, published by the Hours Press, started his career. Now that Nina had fallen to her death from her Paddington flat and Buster Crabb likewise would prop up no more pub bars, Gwen thought I should fill the gap as her boon companion. In the bars we frequented, old drinking pals such as Louis MacNeice and Bertie Rodgers would immediately order 'A pint of bitter for the Baron' because the tall, dignified, white-maned Gwen in male dress complete with monocle looked and behaved like a French baron. Unlike the Irish poets, however, the Lord Chief Justice was not quite prepared for this astonishing sight when she arrived at the High Court in the Strand. When he eventually heard of the legal history Gwen had made by appearing as the third party in a divorce case, he quickly brought the commission of his portrait to an end, but not before his own privacy was endangered.

The trial before Mr Justice Marshall about Stephen Ward introducing two girls to the Minister of War and a junior member of the Russian Embassy interested Washington as well as Moscow. Earlier the pens of a young American couple, John Reed and his wife Louise Bryant pleased few people more than Lenin himself.

Indeed the Soviet leader so admired Reed's books on the Russian Revolution that when Reed died in 1920 Lenin had him buried in the Kremlin. Another American of the Left was William Bullitt who went on a special

mission to Russia in 1919, much appreciated by John Reed and his wife. By the time Washington decided to send the first U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1933, Bill Bullitt was not only ready to return in that capacity but also eagerly awaited in Moscow was Mrs Bullitt, widow of the Soviet hero John Reed. F D Roosevelt felt that as a clever Left-leaning Washington lawyer, Bullitt was well equipped to deal with the doctrines of Lenin and Trotsky. In reviewing *William C Bullitt and the Soviet Union* D W Brogan called Bullitt, 'Rich, highly educated, clever, enterprising, he was basically unstable and disastrously vain. He was also rancorous, as *ENCOUNTER* showed by publishing his absurd and vengeful attack on Woodrow Wilson with which he associated the name of Freud.'

Bullitt thought an appreciation of the West could be instilled in the Soviets by teaching them to play polo and by his believing everything Stalin told him. Eventually, Bullitt realised he would never be taken seriously and his admiration for the new Russia changed to hatred. His wealth enabled him to become a colourful American Ambassador to France where he wanted a deal between Hitler and France, a united force against the wicked Russians. Bill and his beautiful wife Louise visited and received at the embassy Gertrude Stein and Alice B Toklas, Ernest Hemingway and Dil de Rohan, Barbara Hutton and Jimmy Donahue.

The pre-war period of the international smart American set salivated over no greater *cause celebre* until the Bullitts' friend Mrs Ernest Simpson set her cap at King Edward VIII, afterwards going naturally to honeymoon at the Bullitts' splendid house in the south of France. If Edward VIII later took his wife's long affair with the outrageous Jimmy Donahue in his stride, not so the 'disastrously vain' Ambassador Bullitt who, similarly faced by a rival, sued for divorce on learning of his wife's passion for Gwen Le Gallienne. Dil de Rohan hardly relished the fact that after Louise's tragic death in the most degrading circumstances, Gwen Le Gallienne set-up house in London with Dil's arch-rival, Elizabeth Sprigge. It was La Sprigge who pressed the Baron's trousers and got out the right tie for the famous meeting between Lord Chief Justice Parker and Gwen which I suggested. Meanwhile, Bill Bullitt, no longer American Ambassador-at-large, wrote avidly to Dil and other old Paris friends about the Stephen Ward affair.

But if Lord Parker never wanted to see the astonishing figure of Gwen Le Gallienne ever again, nothing could stop her talking. Just as New York gossipped when the serviceman had his penis cut off which sent Jimmy Donahue and his accomplices fleeing to Mexico, so Evan Tredegar adored giving dinner parties at which Prince Yussupov told his version of Rasputin's murder and how the monk's severed penis ended up as a relic prized by a Russian religious sect in Paris. The strange affair and death of Ambassadress

Bullitt (always known as Louise Bryant) with Gwen Le Gallienne had likewise done the rounds, and naturally Stephen Ward gave Gwen many pints of the best bitter as she related how the Lord Chief Justice had literally thrown her out of his room. Lord Parker was involved in a scandal and he determined to show the world at large but particularly the gutter press of Fleet Street that just as Lady Astor and Lord Beaverbrook gagged the press when, at different times, Bobbie Shaw and Tom Driberg had homosexual troubles, so nobody would be allowed to publish the reason for Gwen's rude dismissal from the life of England's Lord Chief Justice.

I particularly disliked one aspect of the Ward trial. Lord Parker knew personally a great deal more about Stephen Ward's circle than can yet, twenty-seven years later, be disclosed as Stephen Dorril learnt after interviewing me for *Honeytrap*. Yet Parker went on to preside over another case at the Appeal Court when Lucky Gordon, who had been given a three-year jail sentence for assaulting Christine Keeler, appealed and won. The Lord Chief Justice personally telephoned Mr Justice Marshall, and the subject of Lucky Gordon's appeal now became part of the Stephen Ward trial. Ludovic Kennedy did not like this intervention by the Lord Chief Justice and wrote, 'It was by any standards a feeble case. It consisted mainly of uncorroborated statements by proven liars: it was a hotchpotch of innuendoes and smears covered by a thin pastry of substance. It was a tale of immoralities, rather than crimes.'

Despite the exhausting day in court, Stephen Ward turned up for the Museum Gallery party trying to be his usual charming self. But I could see he realised the die was cast against him. The so-called Establishment were out for their pound of flesh. Ward was intrigued by the medieval abortionist's account of the fight with the reporters at the twenty-first birthday party but felt certain the matter would be kept out of the court because the titled host was wealthy and important enough to do so. In any case a couple of press cameras were not difficult to replace unlike the serviceman's penis in New York.

Stephen Ward's first exhibition was held at Leggatts Gallery in St James Street, largely due to the good offices of Peter Johnston, a partner there who had seen Stephen's chalk studies of Paul Getty, the American magnate who gave fabled parties at his historic country house Sutton Place. Margaret Duchess of Argyll was hostess at one of the most splendid parties put on in Getty's honour, she being one of the titled women who attracted the magnate. It had amused Stephen Ward to read in my book on Brazil that Margaret Argyll had found her way to the same pension where I stayed in Brazil's remote but beautiful 18th century town, Ouro Preto.

During his trial Ward rushed to write the story of his life and in it he states, 'Mr Gaitskell I drew on the morning after Paul Getty's famous party at

Sutton Place, named "The Battle of Gettysburg" from the vast number of people there. I went straight on, only stopping by my flat to change.' While Stephen was drawing the leader of the Labour Party, Hugh Gaitskell, I was sitting in a lawyer's office because a rich, young man-about-town had also been to the Sutton Place party and on his return to London continued the Battle of Gettysburg by battering and damaging the front door of my new flat in Guilford Street with a champagne bottle which led to the first of many High Court actions.

Stephen Ward's drawings of famous people had once been highly regarded and appeared in the papers, since it was Colin Coote, the Managing Director of the **Daily Telegraph** who not only went to Ward as a patient and played bridge with him, but introduced Stephen to Captain Ivanov from the Russian Embassy. Now suddenly, the patronage of the powerful Conservative **Daily Telegraph** did not matter as Ward and his pictures at the Museum Gallery became offensive. How could the Establishment possibly acknowledge the artistic prowess and the royal connections of a portraitist accused of involvement with prostitution?

BBC Television covered the Museum Gallery exhibition and the international press had already convicted Ward by public rumour and gossip. On Tuesday 30 July the court rose with the summing-up incomplete. But Ward's solicitor warned his client he could expect a guilty verdict and a two-year sentence. It was Oscar Wilde before the vindictive Mr Justice Wills all over again, the verdict of the Establishment against Ward who broke the Eleventh Commandment of not being found out. Yet not even the jury could agree on all points, but they did find him guilty of living on the immoral earnings of Keeler and Rice-Davies. This was the most outrageous factor of the whole case, a complete travesty of natural justice.

Before Mr Justice Marshall could pronounce sentence with the full connivance of Lord Chief Justice Parker, Stephen went home and took an overdose, leaving a note saying, 'The horror, day after day at the court and in the streets. It's a wish not to let them get me. I'd rather get myself - I do hope I haven't let people down too much. I tried to do my stuff.'

A week later six people went to his funeral at Mortlake Crematorium. A large wreath of white roses sent by twenty-one authors and artists arrived at the undertakers. Ken Tynan was the best drama critic of Stephen Ward's generation. He had shocked the nation by daring to use the word 'fuck' on television. Tynan and his friends wrote on the wreath of white roses, 'To Stephen Ward, a victim of British hypocrisy.'

The news had a predictable effect on my own friends. Gwen Le Gallienne wanted to go around and have a good man-to-man fight with Gilbert Laithwaite who supported Lord Astor and left Ward in the lurch. As

Gwen had been arrested in more than enough pub fights recently, I talked her out of it and though fuming she was content to wait for Laithwaite on his next emergence from the gents lavatory. Lady Nancy Astor was also American, like Gwen, but there the likeness ended, for The Baron tossing down her pints of bitter held Nancy up to ridicule for many of her public sayings, but for none more than her anti-alcohol declaration, 'I would rather commit adultery than drink a glass of beer.'

Dil de Rohan had written that the Gray's Inn Road police had read all my letters which included this, 'I am surprised you have got "the biggest drunk in Europe" to act as intermediary in your sordid affairs. I am also surprised to learn from Gwen that your clearest memory of Monday night was of being thrown across the room by me. I can only conclude that you were once more completely drunk that you imagined yourself back in Dublin battling with Mary Oliver and frying pans.'

Few days passed in which Gilbert Laithwaite did not drink with Sir Robert Blundell, the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, who had a boyfriend of his own and therefore understood Laithwaite's and Tom Driberg's plight and asked the police to investigate Dil's shouting out of the window. I often pulled Dil away from the window, but what later interested the police more was Mary Oliver's habit of throwing her son, John Willis, a small person, from one side of the room to the other.

Because Tom Driberg wrote in any case so much about his own visits to public lavatories, he would hardly have objected to his friend Montgomery Hyde writing the story of Tom talking his way out of court after a young constable had caught Tom in the public lavatory close to Gray's Inn Police Station. Before I went into the High Court to seek an injunction following the Getty party at Sutton Place and the champagne bottle attack on my front door, I had to get affidavits from my neighbours with statements about the prolonged breach of the peace with undertakers arriving in the middle of the night complete with coffins to remove their supposedly dead bodies. The affidavits also contained the names and numbers of police from the Gray's Inn Station who had been involved and what action they had taken about the breach of the peace that had started between rich lawyers and their families who were well-known to Lord Chief Justice Parker, and the equally rich young-man-about-town who liked to have members of the royal family to his champagne parties. Among the police who lay in wait with the lawyers for the disturbers was the young constable Tom Driberg had trouble with in the gents lavatory. The Gray's Inn Road police had also known Dil and Driberg long before coming to question us about Buster Crabb's last dive under the Russian warship.

The police knew Dil as an extremely defiant person and in many ways

she was thrilled at the thought that she might well follow Stephen Ward into the dock at the Old Bailey. If Ward in Dil's eyes, was a weak man who took an overdose, Dil was a strong woman ready to take on the Establishment of Sir Anthony Blunt and Sir Gilbert Laithwaite. For many years Bobbie Shaw and his mother, Nancy Astor, kept going by their fights as John Grigg wrote, 'his position, when he emerged from the Scrubs, was unchanged... No two people knew better how to hurt each other, and they did so increasingly.'

Katusha was dead, but Mary Oliver had survived yet another cancer operation, helped, she claimed by a strong Arab potion I had brought from her beloved Tangier. With Mary Oliver beside her Dil would indulge in the unusual luxury of telling the truth, not about who was having who in the gents lavatory down in the street below, but who made how much out of the fortunes of war. It did not displease Dil to be called 'The Queen of Spies' since she had been fully aware that in order to deceive German Intelligence, ARABEL, Dil's agents had to put out black propaganda and a number of these agents were lawyers who now sat as High Court judges under Lord Chief Justice Parker. And black propaganda in wartime, I soon learnt, could be blackmail in peacetime.

Cult Figures

When Miss Josephine Farren saw my father fall from his window-cleaner's ladder in the Hungry Thirties, she did not simply just give an account of it to her two sisters over knife-and-fork tea at Mount Charles. They were Quaker ladies properly concerned with pacifism and also with the war on want. When Hellfire Jack and his Orangemen laid my father to rest under the Black Mountain with the Mickeys on the White Rock Road side and the paupers' graves on the other, Miss Farren deemed my mother and we three children needed a sea-holiday at the Bangor West home she ran.

This old lady completely fascinated me and her voice with more than a touch of the Malone accent, had quality which transcended time and place and seemed to me like that of an angel as she read poetry or the Psalms aloud. Her voice affected me so deeply during the eleven years I knew her that ever since I have preferred a woman's voice in the pulpit or on the stage and of course I advocate women priests. Josephine was no high priestess of evangelical fashion, but a tiny, unmarried woman with a splendid voice which influenced more than the lives of Belfast's poor. On 14 August 1987 Dr Sydney McCann wrote to me from the Malone Road, 'I got to know Miss Josephine Farren when she with her two sisters lived in Mount Charles. She was a saintly woman and a great Bible student. She very kindly gave me her Bible which she had used for study and when giving Bible expositions. It is full of marginal notes and outlines of talks and has a lot of "insets" ... I was interested in your comments about the late Bishop MacNeice's widow. I knew the Bishop but not Mrs MacNeice.'

Over the years many readers have written to me about my books giving me exact details which I could not possibly have remembered. W R Rodgers interviewed me in a BBC broadcast about the farm in Donegall Avenue which I had written about, but many years after Bertie Rodgers died I received this July 1987 letter, 'The Belfast Telegraph 16th July article by Sandra Chapman in which there is your account of collecting swill to feed pigs owned by the Reid family, who had a large farm in Donegall Avenue, attracted me. Joseph Reid's eldest daughter was my mother and I was his eldest grandchild. He took up residence in 184/186 Donegall Avenue in 1917 and we lived with the family there. I was born in 1913 and have happy memories of the "Bogs" as we called it and the farm. As well as the 40 pigs... When Grandad aged, his son Ben took over. He had a paralysed arm. When I tell anyone I lived on a farm in Belfast they find it hard to believe me.'

As the new motorway carved through the Bog Meadows and the gypsy caravans and horses disappeared, the days of helping Ben Reid drive home his six cows and milking goat from the nine marshes and four lakes of the Bog Meadows seemed like a story by that other frequenter of the place, Forrest Reid who wrote, 'My gods were the protectors of the fields and orchards and flocks.'

An author with an advantage over me in recalling the 1930s was Dr Eric Gallagher, the former President of the Methodist Church in Ireland who had all records of dates and names when he came to write, **The Story of the Belfast Central Mission 1889-1989**. He told of William Bryans becoming a full-time lay worker in 1890 and noted that 'open-air work at the Custom House steps was becoming more difficult... the centenarian John Bryans JP, doyen of the Orange Order, was still mentally alert up till his death in the spring of 1988.' But much space in Eric Gallagher's book is devoted to the work of Mr and Mrs John Young at Childhaven in County Down, who appear in two of my books. After the first memorable meeting with Miss Josephine Farren in 1933 at the Bangor West home, I spent my summers at the holiday home run by the Youngs who also had charge of the adjoining orphanage. Dr Gallagher quotes my description of those summers, 'As one of the thousands of the needy children on whom the Youngs spent an unstinting love, the least to be done in thanks was to set down the memory of their name. Their name will always be linked in my mind with the golden sands and rock pools and oystercatchers and swooping sea-swallows.'

I also described the nights in Childhaven's dormitories and Eric Gallagher notes that 'Each dormitory held fifteen three-quarter-size beds that could sleep two children comfortably and three if needed. Thus, without any undue concern at that time, it was possible to sleep at least sixty children and sometimes more.'

Others have linked my name with the cover-up of sex scandals at Kincora Boys' Home and my appeals for action about the abuses which were ignored by Cabinet Ministers. As my own youthful experience of Ulster children in care shows, with sixty boys, many verging on or already at puberty and having to share three-quarter-size beds, a degree of after-dark sexual activity occurred as is normal in such circumstances, but there was no degradation and no buggery by force as there was at Kincora. Because Mrs Young and her female assistants looked after us we tended to try and shock them with lewd talk.

In **No Surrender** I wrote, 'We also had some smart questions ready for the large, purple-faced preacher who came to talk to us on Sunday night. After the service he had a question-time and every year there was bound to be a wag who asked "If Eve was the first woman, who did her childer marry, Mister."

The whole subject of sex was taboo, and solid, evangelical housewives winced at our language. They quickly set us more Scripture to learn when they heard us swear. When we made walking excursions to the different towns, we chalked enormous phallic signs on the sea-wall which the pious eyes could not possibly miss.

'So bad did they consider us that girls from the permanent orphanage were kept strictly behind the strong wire fence that separated us. But long ago, in the streets at home, we had thrashed out the complete process of reproduction, and by now were on familiar terms with it. We used our talk about it simply because we knew, for unimaginable reasons, the grown-ups became embarrassed whenever sex was mentioned... All sexual activities were lumped together under the general epithet "dirty tricks". We were left to find out for ourselves the changes taking place in our bodies at this time, changes which weak lungs and thin bodies did nothing to mute.

'Homosexuals also entered our experience. Apart from Harry at the clinic, whom we could not quite make out except that he was a big jinny and very popular, there was a man called Moses Greer. He minced and flapped his wrists; he swaggered his hips; laughed and talked in a cracked, high voice; and loved to be whistled at by the corner-boys. He used to chat with the women about going to dances, and the dresses he would wear. Nobody minded Mosie in the least, and most were sorry when he was sent to jail for a robbery... I often thought of poor Mosie and wondered if he would be allowed his pale lemon ball-dresses in the prison. Local opinion said that he had only stolen to get money in order to buy Sandy, his soldier friend, out of the army. Although sensitive about things of the flesh, the female guardians of the holiday home were extremely good women, very efficient and generally concerned about our young and lusty souls. The rigid righteousness of our surroundings irked at times, but we enjoyed the holidays immensely, living through the long winter with many a thought of next summer by the sea.'

The learning of Scripture as punishment did not annoy me as much as some since I had a good memory, but Biblical boasts about longevity and the obsession with the 'begatting' puzzled me, such as 'And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years; and he died.'

On 3 September 1988 a **Daily Telegraph** feature stated, 'The past mattered, says P. J. Kavanagh, since it creates the present. He went in search of his Irish great-grandfather in Tasmania. But it wasn't ancestor-worship that took him there. His quest was more personal: for his own identity.'

Having experienced the sharp end of my family's reaction to wanting

an explanation as to why my mother's maiden name was Georgina Bell while her brother's was Robert Campbell, I knew the 'begatting' on the maternal side to be a banned branch of genealogy. But on the Bryans side I was always hoping that Canadian or English cousins would come again knocking at our door for I knew they would give me more than a silver threepenny piece for a look at the 'grave papers'. My grandfather Richard Bryans had bought the new grave in the City Cemetery because he wished to be buried beside his 'Eliza daughter of winding-master Burgess' and the older, double grave 'up the country' had only space for one coffin.

The first of the three men who went to the trouble of drawing up family trees and actually sending them to us was Canon John Lonsdale Bryans born in 1853, the son of the Rev William Bryans. I culled these details from the **Radley Register**, the first edition of which was published by Ernest Bryans in 1897. The author with a Belfast background who knew Ernest Bryans long before I was born, was Gerald Brenan who went to Radley in 1908, and wrote in **A Life of One's Own**, 'My second form-master was Mr Bryans. He was an elderly man - white moustaches, trembling hands, irritable, fussy and fidgety - but a figure of standing in the school because he was a senior housemaster. He lived with his mother, read aloud with a sort of nervous gusto the leading articles in **The Times**, and in summer holidays went fishing in Scotland... but long years of schoolmastering had embittered him. He hated the sloppiness, silliness, laziness and downright stupidity of boys. For this reason he could scarcely ever bring himself to speak to us except in a sarcastic tone.'

Since Ernest Bryans had already become an elderly man with trembling hands by 1908, he was a poor wretch of a man indeed when I met him at Oxford in 1944, and certainly not the host of gay scenes with Guy Burgess and me that others have wrongly written about and which appears to be the basis for Ken Livingstone calling me Guy Burgess's lover. Another Old Radleian who has written of Ernest Bryans is George Taylor, 'Apart from his teaching, Ernest Bryans was in my opinion the greatest benefactor Radley has known. He took interest in and identified himself with almost every activity and was extremely kind and generous. Many a time did he take a boy or two into Oxford in his dog-cart, give them lunch and take them on to see a good match. His benefactions to numerous funds, his presents to the College such as the Jubilee Window in Chapel, his services as Social Tutor, Sub-Warden, and as Warden in the Summer Term of 1910, are all illustrations of his keenness for the welfare of the school.'

Ernest Bryans retired from Radley in 1919 and was succeeded by Adam Fox who had earlier taught at Lancing where his hymn-writing was much appreciated by a pupil called Tom Driberg, as that politician with the

bishop's voice states in **Ruling Passions**. In the same book Driberg also writes of becoming, like Fox, Select Preacher to Oxford University. When Ernest died in Oxford on 20 October 1951 in his 94th year, Adam Fox had become Archdeacon of Westminster and wrote, 'Ernest Bryans was Sub-Warden of Radley when I became Warden in 1918. I never met him till he was over 60 years of age; he was born in the same year as my own father, and was already a master at Radley when I was born. I was given to understand, without perhaps being told it, that I should probably find him formidable. But as it turned out this was not in the least so. My more intimate friendship with him began about 1922 when I asked him if he would like to go away with me one Summer Holidays. He seemed so pleased that I was quite surprised. We went to Scotland, and that was only the first of many holidays we had together... As he grew older and our walks somewhat shorter, we took to going to the seaside... In the summer of 1926 I stayed with him for several months in his house in the Banbury Road, Oxford. He then kept three maids, I think, and lived with some ceremony... When I came into residence at Magdalen in 1929 our contacts became frequent... it was the mixture of affection and criticism which made him such a character. For my own part I believe I had the privilege of his affection, and, if I was not a pupil, I was certainly a learner and a devotee.'

When Adam Fox went into residence at Magdalen as Dean of Divinity, a student there was Ernest Bryans's nephew Max Bryans who also saw much of the house in Banbury Road. On 8 February 1986 Max wrote to me, 'Poor Uncle Ernest, he did get mixed up with some strange folk as well. I had never any idea.' I knew that the spy-catching authors would certainly find out why my name got into the press with Tom Driberg and Canon Adam Fox, and that those authors would probably refer to Sir John Gilmour, the 1930s Home Secretary responsible for M15, and quote in their books Gilmour's warning to the Cabinet of 'a risk that the influx of refugees from Germany may include a certain number of Communists.'

In view of this, I wrote to Max Bryans's brother John on 28 December 1985 since he was not only Ernest's nephew but also Sir John Gilmour's son-in-law. My letter said, 'Dear Jack, I find it difficult to believe that more than twenty years have passed since we last met when you came to Casa Portugal when the Portuguese Ambassador hosted a launching party for my book on the Azores. But, of course, an even longer period has passed since your brother Max wrote to me asking when I was going to write the history of the Bryans family. This morning I heard from the Earl of Rosse about letters and papers that are "currently being incorporated into the archives of our Muniment Room as well as the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland." My own letters, as well as those written to me since the 1940s, have been

collected for many years by the same Public Records Office and elsewhere, as well as in the Muniment Room at Birr Castle. Lord Rosse wrote to me because in the 1960s his ancient great-aunt Adeline (the late Countess de la Feld) appointed me as her literary executor.

'The link between the Rosse and Bryans family goes back to long before I, or even my father, was born. As the link is likely to feature in forthcoming books perhaps you or Max would kindly confirm whether I have got your side of the family properly documented. Rosse's great-aunt Ad was born in 1881, the oldest daughter of Sir Cecil Lister-Kaye, though she spent much of her childhood with her childless uncle, the 7th Duke of Newcastle. The Duke had his Newcastle Prize interests at Eton but he spent much time at Radley where he sat on the Council from 1898 to his death in 1928. The Duke's particular friend at Radley was Ernest Bryans who was appointed classics master in 1882 by telegram in Italy where he was going from one Doria palace to another - the Duke's sister Emily having that year become Princess Doria...

'The existence of the Bryans language prizes at Radley today is due to Ernest's great distinction in teaching German and Spanish as well as classics. And Lord Rosse today is arranging his great-aunt's papers about her amazing career translating from Russian, French and Italian, as well as her hatred of that other visitor to the Doria palaces, the poet Gabrielle D'Annunzio who was also the founding father of Fascism. In the First World War the great-aunt and her friend Lady Rodney ran a Red Cross centre in France where Ernest Bryans's cousin Richard Bryans (my grandfather) was also a translator of both French and German.'

Jack replied that my letter interested his brother Max so much that Max cycled over to see me. Max and I met several times to try and put the record straight, especially about the war when Lonsdale Bryans seemed more important at the Foreign Office than Jack's father-in-law as Minister of Shipping. When Jack's naval son Patrick had his first ship commissioned in Belfast during the 1960s, his Uncle Max toured Ulster interviewing people so that he could make a convincing family tree of blacksmiths and grave-diggers which he subsequently asked me to vet in the way I had checked the manuscripts sent to me by others of Max's cousins who like me wrote travel books.

Like our friend Edwina Mounbatten, Jack's wife Anne was a senior member of St John Ambulance and she arranged a number of meetings about my book on Malta. The Mountbattens knew the island well when my father's nephew Frank served with them in the Royal Navy, although it was another island, Wight, that usually brought us together during Cowes Week after Edwina died in 1960. Thirty years later when authors had begun to disinter

Dickie Mountbatten's life Jack decided that things had gone too far, and I agreed because the books touted a lot of unsubstantiated nonsense about sex while giving not a whisper about how people in our family had made a bold attempt to stop the war.

The North Belfast Mission boasted the Rev William Maguire and Hellfire Jack Bryans as its star preachers and apostles of temperance while the Belfast Central Mission made similar claims for William Bryans and the Rev John Spence and their fight against the demon drink. Perhaps the most extraordinary of 'The Happy Evenings' at the Grosvenor Hall occurred when Randolph Churchill announced, 'I often think how lucky it is that we have Lady Astor in these islands to preach prohibition. It is the one thing that ensures the fact that we shall not have prohibition. I don't know if you have ever listened to a speech by Lady Astor; if you have, you will know that it is the first thing that will drive you to drink.' Reporting the event on 22 January 1932, the **Northern Whig** stated that the Rev John Spence in 'thanking Mr Churchill for his brilliant lecture ventured to suggest that with the years that brought wisdom Mr Churchill might unsay some of the things he had said.' Particularly offended was the superintendent's wife. Mrs Jane Spence, niece of the former British Prime Minister, Andrew Bonar Law, who behaved as modestly about her background as Randolph Churchill did arrogantly about his.

A man who had a good reason to dislike Randolph Churchill was a member of Canon John Lonsdale Bryan's family who also, like the ancient cleric, liked driving fast cars and flying all over the world. He came to our house in Belfast several times in the 1930s but death spared him from this account in the 1986 biography of Hess, Deputy Führer of the Third Reich by Hess's son Wolf, 'the former ambassador, who in the plans of the German Resistance ranked as Foreign Secretary in a post-Hitler government, had had loose contacts since early 1940 with Halifax, the British Foreign Secretary, through the British amateur diplomat and globetrotter James Lonsdale Bryans.'

Few things amused Lonsdale Bryans more than the epithet 'amateur diplomat' because he had access to important ears closed to many British ambassadors. He was a professional fixer. He certainly won the confidence of the Wednesday Society in Berlin which formed much of the resistance aimed at getting rid of Hitler. Ulrich von Hassel had been German Ambassador in Rome when a leading British diplomat there eloped with his children's nanny. The children were themselves married by the time I met their mother Freda in 1952 when her nephew John Hicks married my sister Eileen.

But Lonsdale Bryans shared Prince Doria's and Ambassador Hassel's hatred of Hitler and the peace plan Lonsdale carried to Foreign Secretary

Halifax wanted, 'Peace in the West as soon as possible, so that Europe would not be Bolshevized by a Russian military victory over a weakened Germany.' The British government refused to accept the terms carried by Bryans and then another peace-feeler even more mysteriously appeared in the form of Hess himself who spent many years of internment close to Canon Lonsdale Bryans's stall at Brecon Cathedral and even nearer to my own vantage point at Baille Glas Church.

Muriel Hicks and her sister Freda tried desperately to build bridges between my sister's impoverished family in Belfast and her marriage into the freehold-rich estate at Ealing owned by Mrs Hicks. Muriel and Freda seized with delight on my familiarity with Evan Tredegar's antics as related in **As I was Going Down Sackville Street**, and the two sisters, both Catholic converts, adored it when their pre-war friend, Sir Alec Randall, a former British Minister to the Holy See, gave my books such glowing reviews. Months before my sister's wedding, Alec Randall had received a copy of Lonsdale Bryans's **Blind Victory: Secret Communications: Halifax - Hassel**.

Ten years earlier Lonsdale had written **The Curve of Fate (On the evolution of man)** which I was not encouraged to read even though our house seemed to be crammed with his aunt's publications such as **Our Daily Lives. Eighteen lessons for Young Women's Bible Classes**. Sibella Bryans also wrote for the Mother's Union to which my own mother belonged, but Sibella's visits to Belfast were monopolised by the Egypt General Mission's lawyer, William Fulton. Canon and Mrs Lonsdale Bryans had business links with Charles and Mabel Wills of Barry over the shipping interests in Egypt where the rich merchant Fritz Hess sent his son Rudolf to study at the German Protestant School in Alexandria. Sibella Bryans had no daughter yet experienced a mother's joy when Mabel Wills's daughter, Dr Mary, was called of the Lord to give her great gifts of surgery and preaching to the Shebeen Hospital of the Egypt General Mission.

Sibella not only went to Egypt in winter laden with many copies of her lessons for Young Women's Bible Classes, but she accompanied Dr Mary Wills to Belfast when the missionary came home on furlough hoping to recruit other young men and women from the Ulster city where the Egypt General Mission had started with my grandfather's seven friends in 1898. When Mary Wills was home in 1946 and I shared her platform she loved to amuse the audience by telling how as a boy I asked her at a magic lantern show on the Shebeen Hospital, 'Do you ride the camels to work, missus?'

Canon Lonsdale Bryans and Canon Henry Stewart of Barry had similar attitudes to spirituality and they all met regularly at Lanson House where Charles and Mabel Wills lived out of sight and sound of their famous dry-docks at Barry. Naturally, neither Canon Stewart's nephew, Lord Tredegar,

nor his friend, young Lonsdale Bryans, got a welcome to prayers and drawing-room tea at Lanson House or to the Shebeen Hospital in Egypt, but they often globe-trotted with exotic companions related by blood or adventure. Evan Tredegar and Lonsdale Bryans found the Wednesday Society in Berlin more congenial than Pastor Niemöller's Confessing Church, though after Hitler had Niemöller arrested in 1937, Evan's and Lonsdale's peace missions consisted partly of a scheme to barter Rudolf Hess imprisoned in Evan's Monmouthshire for Niemöller languishing in Dachau concentration camp.

My family in Belfast got dreadfully upset when Evan and Lonsdale descended on Ulster to visit Canon Bryans's schoolfriend from Radley, Conolly William Lecky-Browne-Lecky, whose son Tibby so often appeared in the newspapers dressed as a woman. But building family trees was a useful way of entering the evangelical forest. On 24 June 1932 **The Times** announced, 'Mr Maxwell Bryans was best man to his brother. Sir John and Lady Gilmour afterwards held a reception at 6 Cadogan Square, and among the guests were...'

As the Home Secretary, Sir John Gilmour knew all the right people sometimes for the wrong reasons. Of the many who went to the reception at Sir John's town house in 1932 not all would live to see their names in 1980s spy books, and as for the duchesses present, death spared Kitty Atholl the pain of seeing herself described as 'the Red Duchess.'

However, Max Bryans did see it, so little wonder he wrote to me on 15 January 1986, 'Thank you very much for your long letter. I too much enjoyed our meeting last week. First, yes, I would be interested to make the Radley visit with you. I did manage to make out a pedigree for my old friend Sam Bryans of Willoughby-on-the-Wolds, Notts, back to old John, carpenter, of Walton-on-the-Wolds, born 1677. I feel safer with carpenters than kings - whatever old Ernest might say. I like your anecdotes: to my mind they are the spice in biographical books. I will ring you about Radley when warmer weather and lighter evenings come. Yours ever Max.'

This is typical of the letters written to me by Jack and Max Bryans between 1944 and 1988 when John Costello's **Mask of Treachery** came out quoting not only Jack's long-dead father-in-law, Sir John Gilmour and me, but also Kitty Atholl as the Red Duchess. The book angered Jack who telephoned me, and I duly recorded him saying, 'There's a chap upstairs who will sort it all out when the time comes.' This surprised me for I had always assumed Jack did not believe in a God 'upstairs' since he relished telling how his father, the Rev Reginald du Faure Bryans, had lost his faith and was honest enough to tell his bishop so thereby losing his living although he had money to buy manor houses far larger than the abandoned rectory.

Jack retired from the Royal Navy at the grand old age of 25 to his

country estate, Langdon Manor, in Dorset, when he and his brother Max bought an airline much to the convenience of the globe-trotting Lonsdale. They sold the airline in 1939 but retained its research department at Mitcham which became Bryans Aero-Equipment whose canteen provided me with better wartime food than Canon Lonsdale's table.

Sibella Bryans's *Lessons for Young Women's Bible Classes*, first published in 1885, much pleased the family of a Welsh lawyer, Elwyn Jones, born in 1909, the son of a tin-plate rollerman. He became President of the Cambridge Union and as a young barrister wrote against the rise of Nazism, later being Counsel for the Prosecution at the Nuremberg war crimes trials which sent Hess to Spandau prison for life. By 1964 when my own counsel, now Lord Justice Dillon, was getting me costs and damages after the Paul Getty party at Sutton Place, the poor boy from South Wales had become Sir Elwyn Jones, the Labour Party's Attorney General and rose to be Lord Chancellor Elwyn-Jones in 1974.

By then many of our Left-wing wartime friends who advocated abolition of the House of Lords had themselves been safely elevated to its red leather benches. As my neighbour, Lord Chancellor Elwyn-Jones sometimes joined me at night as I walked my dog Caspar and he invariably talked about the scandalous cost of keeping an old man alone in the vast Spandau prison guarded by an international military force. But Jones was outraged when I referred to our conversations and letters in a High Court action started by one of the many gagging writs intended to keep me quiet.

In 1988 I was again persuaded to give interviews about Hess and the court case was eventually heard in 1991 when I showed that Wolf Rudiger Hess was correct in claiming that Lonsdale Bryans had run the 'Hess case' for the German Resistance and that an injuncted book was incorrect in stating that Lord Mountbatten had run it.

Max Bryans was an acknowledged genealogist and as such had sent a young German couple who worked for his airline to see my family papers in Belfast before the war. In *No Surrender* I wrote of their visit, 'They stopped playing tennis as he beckoned, and strode over to me. A kind of divine radiance shone about their blond heads and smooth tanned limbs. Nothing was ever seen in our grey city like them.' They were researching my grandfather's First World War record and how he had been a translator of both French and German in a Red Cross station with Adeline de la Feld.

Sibella Bryans's father, Colonel Tomkinson, had been rich but not so rich as his fellow-officer and Deputy Lieutenant, Colonel Vaughan of Courtfield whose wife Florence was Adeline de la Feld's sister. The sisters took an interest, though each from a different angle, in the Abergavenny prisoner because Hess was a problem inmate who liked to be taken on

excursions into the hills of the Vaughan estates. In her early life Adeline had regarded herself as imprisoned by the wealth and privilege of her parental home.

Adeline wrote in her autobiography, 'My most vivid impression in retrospect is that my early years were spent in a continuous endeavour to ESCAPE. Oppressed by an abiding sense of captivity I likened myself to Andromeda chained to a rock, the Riphean Rocks. From a window looking on the park how often I tried to discern the figure of the messenger coming to announce deliverance. My planning consisted in escaping from the rock, the Family Place.'

The place of escape lay south of the Yorkshire border in Nottinghamshire where her Uncle Newcastle had got himself a duchess at Clumber when Adeline had acted as one of the bridesmaids. Weekend parties swept up and down the white marble staircase, filling the staterooms with laughter and witty but superficial chatter, the greatest exponent of this being Oscar Wilde whose play on words won more approval than the alien plainsong attempted by the duke's private choir.

In his book *The Stringed Lute* John Furnell recalls the first night of Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* in 1895. The Duchess of Newcastle was in the theatre foyer with the French Ambassador, the Prince of Wales and Mrs Langtry. Wilde approached Kathleen Newcastle, 'Ah, the dear Duchess!' and Kathleen replied, 'My dear Oscar, what a play, what brilliance. And the dialogue too; too divine. Now I insist that you come down to Clumber. It would be a real act of kindness. I have the dulllest house-party next week. Will you give your word of honour that you will come?'

The duke's mother had been Henrietta Hope, the diamond heiress, and her cousin, Adrian Hope, was also related to Mrs Oscar Wilde. Mr and Mrs Oscar Wilde and their two sons lived in Chelsea's Tite Street, a few doors away from Adrian Hope's much grander house which centred around Mrs Hope's enormous studio. When Queen Victoria asked to see a sample of Mrs Hope's celebrated paintings of children, she sent the Queen a portrait of Wilde's son Cyril. This pleased the Queen immensely and she commissioned so many portraits of the royal family that Wilde laughingly remarked he might expect a knighthood in commission. But he went to prison instead and Adrian Hope became guardian of his two children. He consulted Ernest Bryans and young Cyril Wilde went off to Radley in 1899 but with his name changed to Cyril Holland.

Another boy at Radley at the same time was Louis Umfreville Wilkinson who wrote to Wilde in prison, 'I cannot but think of your cruel and unjust fate whenever I pass through Reading on my way to Radley.' This started a lively correspondence, and when Wilde came out of prison he wrote

to the schoolboy, 'I am sending you a book of mine - when it comes out - in about three weeks - you will get it. It is a fanciful, absurd comedy- written when I was playing with that Tiger, Life. I hope it will amuse you. I am directing this to Radley - I suppose you are back there, educating the masters. Write to me soon. Your friend O.'

Louis Wilkinson was one of Ernest Bryans's Old Radleians and I knew him over the years via Evan Tredegar, but with four wives he never belonged to Evan's gay set. He was so close, however, to Aleister Crowley that he became one of Crowley's executors commissioned to recite the Hymn of Pan when Crowley died. This funeral reading became so well known that the BBC got Wilkinson to tell how the undenominational chapel at Brighton's crematorium had the press on one side and Crowley's devotees on the other. The poem is in parts very ecstatic with repetitions of 'Eo Pan! Eo Pan!' Speaking with his refined, Edwardian drawl, Wilkinson recorded, 'I remember the intense excitement caused by the devotees by my reading the Hymn to Pan. I could hear first of all murmurs and then much louder cries of 'Eo Pan! Eo Pan!' form the audience of the devotees, and how the look on the faces of the reporters seemed to grow more and more amazed and uncomprehending.'

Wilkinson believed there was something genuine about Crowley's mysticism based on the principle, 'Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law. Love is the law, love under will.' But was Crowley serious or joking when he boasted to reporters that he only sacrificed the best bred children at his black masses? The Sussex police liked neither the Hymn of Pan being chanted in a frenzy by Crowley's devotees in Brighton's municipal cemetery at Bear Road nor events over the hill at Ovingdean where a boy had been murdered. At the time, Captain Colin Wallace was writing for British Intelligence about the murderous and eventually-murdered John McKeague and McKeague's involvement with alleged witchcraft surrounding the death of that other boy, the ten-year-old Brian McDermott. Colin Wallace's own amazing story, carefully researched by Paul Foot, involved him standing trial for an unsolved Sussex murder as well as his bold stand to expose McKeague and others.

On 14 December 1964 the Deputy Keeper of Records, for the then Government of Northern Ireland, wrote to thank me for sending him some letters written to me by readers of my books, 'Such letters will be meat and drink to writers and researchers and a collection written to a person like yourself might have considerable interest.' Ten years later the Sussex police not only wanted to question me about my correspondence with Ulster fans but Sir George Terry's senior detectives also wanted to interview me about my opposition to a leading churchman reported in the press as 'trying to get the age of consent for sex with children reduced to seven years'. I also opposed

the churchman who criticized police attempts to track down the person or persons who had 'murdered the young schoolboy in cold blood (or hot passion) at Ovingdean,' to quote from the police file. Human blood was essential for any version of the black mass as I had learnt when some of Crowley's devotees celebrated, and as a boy of sixteen I had seen how Evan Tredegar brightened up more than house-parties, and indulged in doings from which women, such as Lady Cunard, were banned.

Wyn Henderson certainly knew a lot about the psychology of men, long before Havelock Ellis was offering her cups of tea in bed and a chamber-pot to 'make water.' Aleister Crowley's biographer aptly called Wyn a 'leading light' of the Aquila Press and, as far as I knew her, she shone equally over her understanding of priests and monks whom she found irresistible. Wyn also knew that if 'Havelick Pelvis' had to have urine in his cup, the black mass demanded 'sanguis et semem', which substances, blood and semen, presumably featured in the black mass celebrated in an Oxford chapel by Maurice Bowra's friends in honour of his installation as Warden of Wadham.

People who indulge in the black arts get a thrill from doing so illegally, like Maurice Bowra, within consecrated ground such as an Oxford chapel or the famous Highgate Cemetery, and over the years the newspapers have thrilled or chilled their readers with accounts of such profanity. But even Brighton Corporation was disturbed to read in the press about what happened when Louis Wilkinson recited the Hymn of Pan in so dismal a chapel as the Bear Road crematorium. Years later, when Aleister Crowley's early associate Peter Churchill was likewise cremated there, many of Peter's friends who went to the funeral were extremely angry when a clergyman who had never met Peter and who insisted on referring to him as 'Lord Victor' conducted a pompous service for such an unpompous person. This hypocrisy, so typical of everything Peter hated, particularly enraged me because Peter, who had spent much of his last years at my home, had wanted our regular visitors Flora Robson and Hermione Baddeley to read some of Evan Tredegar's poems at his funeral. But on the evening before a most superior voice telephoned me to ask if the poems were by one of Aleister Crowley's 'fellow Satanists' because if so, then the readings would not be permitted. Flora Robson phoned me the day after the funeral about what we should write for Peter's obituary in the **Sunday Express**. I said that he had much preferred the company of East End barrowboys to sitting in the West End House of Lords. And that indeed was how Flora and I were quoted in the newspaper.

In the Muniment Room at Birr Castle the Public Records Office of Belfast sorted out the letters of another still-living author, James Lees-Milne who, after Evan Tredegar's death in 1949, went to see Evan's cousin and heir, John Morgan at Tredegar Park. Lees-Milne accurately described John

Morgan as 'absurdly pompous and puffed up with self-importance.' Although John's father became the new Lord Tredegar, the tenant of Tredegar Park was John who went around the country flying his personal standard from his Rolls Royce and besmirching Evan as having been 'so terribly mean' about money and wicked about sex.

In the event of John Morgan getting married and having children to inherit the title, Evan set up a trust which allowed John an income of £40,000 a year which seemed vast compared with the £300 a year in 1949 earned by a married poet already with children, Kingsley Amis, as an assistant lecturer in Wales. But it was not enough for John. Attempts to rehabilitate Evan's image by reference to his many good points were not helped by John discovering in Evan's bedroom 'instruments of the most bloodcurdling nature.' Having told absolutely everybody about this discovery of sadist gear and swearing them to a secrecy he knew they would not keep, John himself developed an obsession over the whips and handcuffs which needed no psychologist to explain, so it was inevitable that people would read about the episode some years later when John died childless too, and James Lees-Milne published his diaries.

The occult interested Ernest Bryans considerably but he strongly disapproved of Aleister Crowley's Temple of Cefalu in Sicily where heterosexual acts were involved before the rising sun. The favourite pupil at Radley that he took in his dog-cart to wine and dine in Oxford became the Rev Frank Shelley-Mills, the authority on Ouspensky and Gurdjieff. The Sussex Police learnt a lot about my association with such people as Evan Tredegar and his rival would-be possessor of P B Shelley's soul, Frank Shelley-Mills, because I told of the Sussex visits in **The Protege**. Evan and Frank both went to Christ Church College, Oxford, as did Tom Driberg. Frank being a better writer than the Shelley-look-alike, endowed a poetry prize at Christ Church, while Tom left his former college his letters - at least the more printable ones.

On 8 April 1989, the spy specialist, Donald McCormick, wrote to me, 'I forget whether I told you about my trip to Oxford to look at the Driberg Papers. There was a lot there about Burgess and Aleister Crowley, as well as Gerald Hamilton. But nothing about Mountbatten. It is on Mountbatten I am raising queries. Have you heard, or do you know anyone who knows that Mountbatten asked Driberg to destroy his correspondence to Driberg? It would seem that he had, including presumably a letter asking him to show Prince Philip around the Houses of Parliament. I trust I am correct on this last point - that Driberg showed the Prince around the HOC and HOL.' In reply I said, "Driberg did destroy much correspondence from Dickie Mountbatten but I would very much doubt if there was a letter asking Tom to show Prince Philip around the Houses of Parliament since this was all so open and fully

documented in **Ruling Passions**, with a foreword by Tom's still-living friend Michael Foot, the former Labour Leader. Try and keep to what was published in Dickie's own life time.'

In **Ruling Passions**, Driberg wrote frankly about his relationship with people alive then who still are today, including Mountbatten's nephew Prince Philip. In 1939 Tom got the Rev Thomas Frederick Charlton to officiate at his mother's funeral, for as Tom wrote in **Ruling Passions**, 'she had liked him and so did I, rather enviously: he had two virile, blond, adolescent boys living with him.' Father Charlton and Canon Fox were still both alive when Driberg wrote his book mentioning them, but also had to exercise restraint because, although retired from workaday ministry when the book was published, they both remained active lovers of 'virile' boys, but were living in clergy accommodation, though admittedly most clergy accommodation that I ever knew was most accommodating to virile, adolescent boys, whether blond or not. Father Charlton probably thought the gay-religious scene in the diocese of Chichester, where Driberg was born, schooled, and fell under the influence of both Father Charlton and Adam Fox who had not only taught at Lancing, but in 1936 first took up his stall as a prebendary of Chichester Cathedral.

For people born in the late 1920s, as I was, Adam Fox and his love for Westminster Abbey are inseparable and he had the rare honour not only of having his memorial service in the Abbey but of being buried there also. When he died in 1976 **The Times** said, 'Canon Adam Fox, Canon of Westminster 1942-63, Archdeacon of Westminster 1951-59, and sub-Dean 1959-63 died on January 17 at the age of 93... he published a long narrative poem "Old King Coel", in 1937 and was specially pleased by his election as Professor of Poetry in 1938. In 1942 he was appointed to a canonry at Westminster Abbey, and now transferred to the Abbey the devotion he had given to his college chapel. His gifts as a preacher at last found full recognition.'

In **Ruling Passions** Tom Driberg wrote of Adam's last sermon preached at the Abbey on his ninetieth birthday. Six weeks before his death Adam Fox wrote to me from the Abbey's Little Cloister about Ernest Bryans, 'I really only got to know Ernest well after I returned to Oxford in 1929 to be Fellow of Magdalen for the next 12 years until I came to the Abbey. He was a remarkable character, in congenial company very sociable, very alert. But I can't now recollect any of his crisp sayings, though they were numerous. I am now 92 years old and I don't remember much. He was I think, the least slovenly person I ever met. I don't think, for example, that he had any "slack" clothes. My picture of him would be of a military man, neatly but not smartly dressed, setting out for his afternoon walk, usually up the Banbury Road, less often in the parks. I sometimes went with him, and he never failed to find

interesting things to point out... I was very glad he settled in Oxford, for I got very fond of him, and he was very kind to me.. I knew one or two of the Lonsdale Bryans side and am sorry to say I never got to know Otto Mundy. I find I have omitted to say that I am now rather - in fact more than rather - blind.'

It was a remarkably long letter for someone of such great age with very little sight, but in view of rather harsh criticism made by some Old Radleians who had seen Ernest too often with globe-trotting Lonsdale Bryans, I wanted Canon Fox's opinion. Ernest's critics were certainly not boys he and Lonsdale Bryans had taken to be wined and dined in Oxford like Frank Shelley-Mills and Otto Mundy, whose portraits Adam Fox had read in **The Protege**. The older Ernest Bryans had been kind to the younger Adam Fox who became 'very fond' of the rather crusty schoolmaster. But Canon Fox later enjoyed a similar relationship with the Lancing schoolboy Tom Driberg, though they raised fewer eyebrows than their much-loved friend, Father Charlton, who had 'two virile, blond, adolescent boys living with him.'

When my book **No Surrender** came out in 1969 the headmaster of Westminster Under School, Patrick Campbell from Ulster, invited me to speak to the boys and naturally there was sherry afterwards with Sub-Dean Fox in the Abbey Cloisters. Today, the composer Peter Muir has returned to teach music at Westminster School and whenever I go there the masters still speak with great affection of the remarkable preacher and poet Adam Fox, a clergyman schoolmaster in the best tradition who loved and was loved by many boys.

The Ernest Bryans-Adam Fox and the Adam Fox-Tom Driberg pairings resembled the similar duos of Guy Burgess with Archdeacon Sharp and Anthony Blunt with Archbishop Buchanan who started his church career at the mission attached to St Patrick's, Belfast, where I was christened. When Sir George Terry's Sussex police came to see me, they were more interested in Blunt's part in Archbishop Buchanan's open-letter to the Rev Ian Paisley in Belfast than in the more publicised connection between Guy Burgess and Archdeacon Sharp.

Guy Burgess was very familiar with the life Francis Rose lived in Germany with Ernst Röhm, as well as Dil de Rohan's with Katusha at that period in the early 1930s because Guy got involved with Archdeacon Sharp who sat on the Church of England's Foreign Relations Council. The archdeacon bore responsibility for spiritual matters in South Eastern Europe where he often went accompanied by a young army officer, Captain Jack Macnamara who the clergyman had 'taken up' as a boy in the same way as Father Charlton had his pair of blond adolescents. By his thirtieth year the captain left the army and became Conservative MP for Chelmsford complete with extreme

Right-wing views like his gay friends Evan Tredegar and Francis Rose. In 1935 Captain Jack appointed Guy Burgess as his secretary whose main task seems to have been the procurement of young blond boys for the sexual gratification of both Archdeacon Sharp and Captain Macnamara. They took a large party of English schoolboys to the Nuremberg Rally, and others to the Olympic Games in Berlin. The fact-finding missions of the Anglo-German Fellowship were duly related to Geronwy Rees as wild homosexual orgies, and this he later told the spy-book authors.

If the Venerable J H Sharp and Guy Burgess left no written or photographic evidence of finding Vienna a homosexual paradise the Foreign Office reports in London showed Vienna as a paradise lost for the Jewish community. Princess Stahremberg was given the job of cleaning the men's lavatory at the main railway station, while other Jewesses were ordered into the trees to make bird noises. The menfolk were rounded up in the Prater, made to strip naked and walk around on all fours like the dogs they were called.

By 1942 Jack Macnamara had become a colonel commanding a battalion of London Irish Rifles, and as both an MP and a friend he went to see Winston Churchill and Brendan Bracken, a visit which Harold Nicolson wrote up in his diary, 'He lunched today with Winston at Downing Street en famille. He had been horrified by Winston's indiscretion in front of the servants.' In May 1945 the House of Commons went to St Margaret's Church, Westminster, to give thanks for 'deliverance from the threat of German domination.' Of the five MPs killed in the war, one was Jack Macnamara and about hearing Jack's name read out Harold Nicolson wrote, 'I was moved. The tears came into my eyes. Furtively I wiped them away. "Men are so emotional" sniffed Nancy Astor, who was sitting next to me. Damn her.'

Whatever Archdeacon Sharp might have been in Vienna ten years before, by the end of the war he was a broken man employed as a curate and consoled with stronger stuff than sherry by Canon Fox at Westminster Abbey Cloisters. But with the beloved Jack dead, Archdeacon Sharp turned more and more to the black masses, practised in the same way as before, by Jack's friend Evan Tredegar. In spite of being a Catholic convert for many years as well as a Papal Chamberlain, Evan liked performing his rites in ancient country churches such as St Wulfran's at Ovingdean. This patron saint had been an early father of the church and because of its foundation in Saxon times the church had a venerable smell of country churchyard and ancient stone and was dim with fickle light through stained glass.

Hidden in its fold of Sussex downland, St Wulfran's inevitably attracted black magic adherents who believed that the ancient church was built on an even more ancient site of a pagan temple. At my first visit to the

church with Tom Driberg and Father Charlton in 1944, I could not possibly have foreseen the reaction of Brighton Corporation to Louis Wilkinson's reading of the Hymn of Pan at the Bear Road crematorium over the hill or that in 1980 a High Court jury would hear me described not even by Crowley's title of the Great Beast but as The Devil himself!

Whatever 'instruments of the most bloodcurdling nature' John Morgan said his cousin Evan Tredegar left behind in his bedroom, I knew Evan in his many roles of mercy, and though these had exotic titles such as 'Commander with Star of Order of the Holy Sepulchre' and 'Almoner for Wales of the Order of St John', in plain terms he gave more than some of the vast profits from his East End slum estate and South Wales coalmines to charity. Evan and I shared a love of music and setting Biblical texts to our own compositions which we used openly at such places as Buckfast Abbey as well as spiritual exorcising of the dead at St Wulfran's Church at Ovingdean. He thought my voice suitable for reading to the blind.

Evan sat on many committees to do with the arts and he loved the theatre, while actors and opera-singers enjoyed splendid after-show receptions laid on at his London home. The gloom of the war years had been considerably brightened by John Clements's and Kay Hammond's talent for light comedy. This busy actor-manager somehow found time to do Sunday evening play-readings with Kay Hammond for the war-blinded at St Dunstan's, Ovingdean, and I was asked to join them. At the back of the Braille Library was Peter Harris listening to our drawing-room comedies.

In the 1950s I stayed in Sussex for periods of three months because Peter Harris became my guru. Peter was still hardly more than a youth when he returned from the Second World War blind and paralysed. He could just about guide a spoon to his mouth. I did not know how anyone so deprived could live, yet Peter Harris not only lived but lived intensely. He was a flame warming others who had grown cold in life. He lived at St Dunstan's on the clifftop east of Brighton and I spent my holidays with him. During the day we would go over the Downs, his rigid, immobile figure being wheeled in a long chair by me, and spend an hour or so in the local Ovingdean churchyard to rest and finish a crossword before returning for his vegetarian supper and an evening in the Queen Victoria pub in Rottingdean.

The local police station led onto the Queen Victoria's backyard and so off-duty constables drank there. The length of Peter's chair and narrowness of the entrance made it difficult for us to get in but the darts-playing police helped us when we arrived, and knowing it was impossible for Peter to use the pub's outside lavatory, the policemen would form a discreet barrier while I got out the plastic bottle. Mrs Ethel Collins presided over the bar and she gave her free time as a St Dunstan's volunteer worker, so Peter and I were

well-known figures around Rottingdean village over the years.

Occasionally an ambulance took us to Glyndebourne or to the Royal Festival Hall, though Peter and I preferred our daily three or four hours of duet singing as I pushed his chair along country lanes. Our repertoire did not include *Götterdämmerung* though it should have done to match the brooding dusk-of-the-gods on our favourite walk along Balsdean Valley where the sweeping flanks of downland excluded sight and sound of the outside world, where the rare early-spider-orchid and rarer bush-cricket flourished in the oppressive heat of summer and where, if gods there were in prehistory, they certainly walked. Aleister Crowley's fascination for these mysterious enclaves of Sussex downland was understandable, but apart from barrows and earthworks they offered no remains of prehistoric sites so the Hymn of Pan had to be intoned in the stained-glass twilight of St Wulfran's church in Ovingdean.

When I came to write travel books critics were puzzled by the variety of interests and the manner in which I described insect life or a Renaissance palace with equal avidity, but my insatiable curiosity for everything about me was not so much to satisfy my urge to write in that particular vein as to let Peter and his fellow St Dunstaners feel that when the books came out on gramophone records they could listen to me talking about my travels in Brazil or the North West Frontier in exactly the same way I talked and described things when we went out to Balsdean Valley or encountered Aleister Crowley's followers in Ovingdean churchyard.

I dedicated *Summer Saga*, my book on Iceland, to Peter, 'For that southern Viking, Harris of the Plough.' The Plough is the pub by Rottingdean village pond and had a courtyard open for summer drinking which made it easy for me to take Peter there for our summer sagas drinking with masters from nearby Rottingdean School who delighted in Peter's knowledge of the Icelandic sagas. The fact that Headmaster Maxwell Hyslop had played rugby for England and scored the vital try against France at Twickenham in 1922 paled beside the tales about Kettle Flatnose, Ragnar Hairy-Brecks, Sigurd Snake-eye and Eyvind the Easterling whose adventures I recorded to please Peter.

I also told in the same book on Iceland of spending a night at a girls' school used as a hotel in summer, which reminded me of a naval friend stationed a little further along the cliffs from St Dunstan's at Roedean School, a land base, who was astonished to read over his bed, 'If you need anything during the night, ring for a mistress.' Peter and other residents knew this was Robin Buckley who became Commandant of St Dunstan's when he left the navy. I loved putting these stories into my travel books, for he had been told by Father Charlton that if Commandant Buckley was intrigued by the bell-

notice about ringing for a mistress, it was Evan Tredegar who had given parties for young sailors at Roedean and had pressed them into black mass sessions down the hill at Ovingdean where Peter and I now sat doing the crossword, trying not to get involved with Aleister Crowley's devotees coming to light candles and leave other relics of their devotions.

Peter had no sight but could see through any sham. He had been too young for university when the war came but no scholar or author left his presence without feeling uplifted and, in the most salutary way, humbled also. Being with Peter inevitably changed my outlook on much in life and he so transcended his physical disabilities that I forgot completely that he was a blind man needing two sturdy attendants to lift him in and out of bed. The locked joints and empty sockets seemed somehow irrelevant for they were not Peter. Peter was a spirit who had triumphed over adversity. When we sat on the the Downs within sight of the sea, he could not see the horizon yet he had horizons of the human spirit that few of us seldom see.

The doctor had told me that Peter would not make old bones so I asked Joy Rendle who ran St Dunstan's canteen to organise a group of our friends for young Peter's last years. Joy's amazing old mother, Mrs Claudia Griffiths, lived on the Rottingdean side of the hill in a white house called 'Wittersham' after the Kent town of that name where her father had been rector.

Claudia Griffiths remembered that as a girl she saw the Archbishop of Canterbury swimming without so much as an archiepiscopal figleaf. A less exclusive but more valuable experience was the fact that the famous August Wilhelmj, who led the orchestra at the first Bayreuth Festival in 1876, taught her the violin while she in turn taught most of the violinists around Rottingdean who all knew Wilhelmj's arrangement of Bach's *Air on the G String*.

Those halcyon days differed drastically from her homelife at Wittersham during the 1950s where she lived with her daughter Nancy Andrews, St Dunstan's transport officer who booked ambulances for Peter's longer journeys. I liked pushing Peter's chair down Wittersham's leafy drive for morning coffee, but only if I was quite certain Nancy was at her St Dunstan's office over the hill. Although living together in intimate domesticity, mother and daughter never spoke to each other, so perfectly expressing their mutual mistrust. They could share nothing, and particularly not the cigarette box or the drinks cupboard. Two gas cookers and two gas meters graced the kitchen. This Trappist regime, inspired by antipathy rather than sanctity seemed all the more extraordinary since both women were followers of Gurdjieff, the founder in 1910 of the Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man, which moved to Paris after the Russian Revolution.

Mrs Griffiths and Nancy felt no contradiction or inconsistency in being staunch Anglicans as well as Gurdjieff disciples, for after all, as they and the

Rev Shelley-Mills entourage in London frequently reminded me, notwithstanding whatever ancient ideas Gurdjieff had picked-up on his Eastern travels, he had absorbed his basic teaching as a student of the renowned Father Börsch, Dean of Kars Cathedral, in the days when Rector Parkes's daughter at Wittersham was surprising the bare Archbishop of Canterbury.

Claudia Griffiths started her philosophy study group through meeting Gurdjieff's daughter Mary Oliver in Rottingdean during the war. But as a great supporter of St Mary's Anglican convent near Wittersham, Mrs Griffiths did not appreciate going into church to find the drunk Mary Oliver wandering down the aisle in nothing but a flimsy dressing gown during a service, saying to the priest in the pulpit, 'Sorry Father, I didn't realise you had company.' Over the years, while Peter was drinking his dandelion coffee at St Dunstons, Joy Rendle would read to him from Gurdjieff's and Ouspensky's books. Peter took these 'higher learning' sessions most seriously but he also looked forward to my holidays in Sussex because, whatever the weather, we would spend the day away from St Dunstons where he had lived most of his adult life.

I much looked forward to my weeks with Peter pushing the wheelchair to the countryside around for these were light-hearted outings with a lot of laughter and in the warm sunshine Peter could exercise his keen sense of smell along country lanes and hayfields where we would astonish the harvesters with snatches of opera before going home for a meal followed by an evening at the Queen Victoria pub. And there Peter's acute sense of smell united with another sense of being. At the slightest whiff of female perfume I would have to describe the girls in detail for Peter. He never despaired that he would marry and leave 'Zombie Lodge' as many called St Dunstons since most of the long-term inmates at that period had been blinded in the Boer and First World Wars.

The off-duty police in the pub often explained Peter's tragic life to the girls and they would venture over with a drink or offer to light his pipe, and, touched by his handsome face and beautiful nature, inevitably gave him a kiss. Some would help me push him up the hill home after we left the Queen Victoria and perhaps go to lover's lane behind the clifftop windmill where generations of Rottingdean's lovers had gone.

Father Charlton was Rector of Dallington at this time but always found his way to the coast road near St Dunstons since curiosity never failed to get the better of him over who was attending the Temple of Pan, as he called a series of old smuggling caves used by gays at Telscombe Cliffs's nudist beach. Father Charlton's success in such matters caused the thoughtful priest deep concern for Peter, and he decided the time had come to dispense with 'the handmaidens of the Lord' as he termed the girls who manually gave Peter

sexual relief. Peter must have 'a bit of the real thing' and the priest was as good as his word when he produced a charming actress who wanted to marry Peter. But would such a marriage work? It would certainly be a disaster for both the girl and Peter if it did not. The resourceful Father Charlton determined to put it to the test.

The vicar of Ovingdean and his small flock got used to Peter and me going to the churchyard every day in my holidays and sheltering in the porch when it rained while I read aloud. We all knew that it took two strong men to lift the heavy and immobile Peter from bed to wheelchair and from either for sanitary purposes. But Father Charlton determined that where there was a will, a way would be found. And so the clandestine tryst was planned in every detail and Peter was lifted onto a makeshift bed in Ovingdean Church to make love with the actress. Father Charlton was triumphant. He and I thought it little enough compensation for the war damage to a teenager's life. Others, however who knew how Father Charlton enjoyed making love to blond adolescents in country churches, did not take this view, especially after Peter paid a visit too many and coincided with the arrival of a coven of Aleister Crowley's devotees. Was it part of Satanic worship? That question would not be asked in the High Court until Peter was dead.

Tom Driberg first encountered Father Charlton in 1926 when the priest became vicar of the Driberg family's church of Withyham St John. But long before that Tom had succumbed to the influence of an assistant master at Lancing School, the young Adam Fox, who wrote verses referring to a pagan god for the school hymn book, a somewhat unorthodox contribution to such an Anglican environment as Lancing, as Tom later recorded in **Ruling Passions**, but perhaps, presaging further unorthodox doings which accompanied Adam's progress from assistant master at Lancing to Sub Dean of Westminster Abbey. At Lancing too, Tom Driberg formed his well-documented friendship with Evelyn Waugh.

Every summer Peter Harris passed but could not see the amazing French cathedral-like pile of Lancing's chapel on the downland as I took him by ambulance to the Fleet Air Arm's holiday camp at Lee-on-Solent where his favourite reader was a woman I knew for years simply as Pam. Only when I was asked if I had read a novel called **The Foxglove Saga** did I learn that Pam was the Countess of Onslow and mother-in-law of the author Auberon Waugh, son of Evelyn. Summer also, of course, found Peter and me in the pub courtyard at the Plough where masters from Rottingdean School would greet us with 'How's Big Betty?' and 'What's Madame La Princess up to these days?' and a favourite, 'What hills is Old Ginger tramping now?'

Rottingdean has one main thoroughfare, the High Street which runs from the coast road through the village, and until the school closed in 1962,

passed Rottingdean School, and then Wittersham as the Falmer Road which goes over the downland to Stanmer Park, seat of the Earls of Chichester until the 1960s when it became the site of Sussex University. During the Second World War, the Countess of Chichester and her rather large daughter, Lady Elizabeth Pelham, a friend of Evelyn Waugh, moved out of the large house as being an obvious target for German raiders, and rented Hillside in Rottingdean.

In **How Do You Do?**, Dil de Rohan, 'Madame La Princess', wrote 'Aunt Dolly Graham died suddenly leaving me some money and her house in Brighton.' When Dil was a girl at Roedean in the First World War Aunt Dolly used to take her to Stanmer Park where Dil first met 'Big Betty' Pelham. Many years later Dil went with Mary Oliver to spend weekends in Rottingdean with the Chichester family at Hillside, and through these people Claudia Griffiths from Wittersham on the Falmer Road became interested in Gurdjieff and subsequently a founder member of the Rottingdean study group.

However, neither 'Big Betty' nor even 'Madame La Princess' in her wildest fights with Mary Oliver made such an impression at Rottingdean School as 'Old Ginger' or 'The Mad Irishman' who had turned up at the school to teach in 1921, claiming he wanted experience in order to start such a school in Australia. A boy who met this young master called Brendan Bracken at this time, but at another school, was the future art historian Kenneth Clarke who wrote, 'I remember dining there with two or three guests including a young man with glasses and a shock of red hair, who never stopped talking for a second. His name was Brendan Bracken.'

By the time Dil and Mary Oliver returned to Rottingdean to stay with the Chichesters at Hillside, the not so young man with a shock of red hair was Dil's boss as Minister of Information. But in 1921 'Ginger' Bracken was a teenager in haste to make his name and fortune and stayed only two terms at Rottingdean School, not long enough to even celebrate Headmaster Maxwell Hyslop's famous Twickenham try for England against France a year later in 1922. The red-headed youth loved long country walks and during one of these he chanced to meet Peter Churchill who later introduced Brendan Bracken to Evan Tredegar. But just as John Morgan quickly, if dishonestly dissociated himself from Evan's instruments of torture so Brendan personally ensured that all Evan's letters to him were burned in the drawing-room fire during Brendan's lifetime.

When Brendan turned up at Rottingdean School claiming he merely wanted teaching experience in order to set up a public school in his native Australia, nobody asked to see his birth certificate. Similarly, because Brendan had seen them together he never checked on Mary Oliver's various claims about Gurdjieff and accepted without question such rumours as

Gurdjieff being a hundred years old. Brendan was only one of many to be amazed to read in **TheTimes** on 12 November 1949, 'Mr George Gurdjieff, who recently died in Paris at the age of 77, leaves in nearly every country in the world friends and pupils to whom he was the incomparable teacher of a way of life.'

Because of his powerful influence and world-wide circle of pupils I took especial care when writing about George Gurdjieff and his family, but I was not altogether surprised when in 1965 I was asked by police and law courts about birth certificates.

In **Fanfare for Brazil** I wrote, 'More amazing to me, and decidedly more useful than the fakir's talents, were those of Dr Daniel de Brito, to whom I was introduced through the Foreign Office. Through Daniel I learnt of Rio's Gurdjieff and Ouspensky centres and of its distinct Kenneth Walker group.' When proof-reading Walker's books in the 1940s I could not have imagined that the Gurdjieff/Ouspensky disciple, a rather dry professor of medicine, would have his own, quite distinct cult-followers in such exotic places as Rio de Janeiro. I was no less amazed when Mary Oliver's friend Jane Bowles became a cult figure in the 1980s complete with documentation of her relationship with Mary.

So many of Gurdjieff's followers converged on Paris for the master's last rites performed with all the solemn pomp of the Russian Orthodox Church, that they brought the city's traffic to a standstill. Aspects of his teaching which interested the Rottingdean group and me dealt with food and with what today would be called 'alternative medicine.' The person I knew who most intelligently practised what Gurdjieff preached was Claudia Griffiths, though her non-stop cigarette smoking no doubt nullified much of what she hoped to achieve. Even so she lived into her nineties and it was she who persuaded Peter Harris to drink dandelion coffee and me to study the medical school at Taxila which, under Buddhist influence, flourished as India's greatest university, already old when Alexander the Great crossed the nearby Indus.

One of Gurdjieff's biographers, James Moore, wrote in his 1980 book, 'The Khyber pass was a strategic lynchpin' when the young George Gurdjieff set off to study the yogis, shamanists, fakirs and other holy men who featured in Gurdjieff's own book, **Meetings with Remarkable Men**. Before going there myself in 1957 to write **Gateway to the Khyber** I had supper with Joy Rendle and her son Timothy, an architect with Gurdjieffian interests. The next time I spoke to Timothy, and to another of Claudia Griffiths's grandchildren, Sally Doust, was not until 1990 when researching this book. Sally had lived for years at Wittersham with her mother and grandmother and though there is a minor difference of opinion as to the duration of the non-

speaking regime between Mrs Griffiths and her daughter Nancy, there is complete accord on how the old lady kept her deep faith in the Anglican church, held Gurdjieff/Ouspensky study groups and practised alternative medicine.

Behind the Plough pub and beside the duck pond is Rottingdean's oldest still-lived in residence, the Whipping Post House where tunnels led from its cellars down to the beach for such famous smugglers as Captain Dunk to unload his contraband goods. It was to the Whipping Post House that Captain Stephen Balcombe took Mary Van Dyck in 1777 after marrying her across the green in St Margaret's Church and where they lived with their three sons until Stephen and his crew were drowned in a battle against the French Revolutionary Government. Thereafter, George IV made himself responsible for the three boys' welfare, though historians repeat the gossip of the time that the three Balcombe boys were the King's bastards. Of one thing there is no doubt, that ever since a member of the court painter, Sir Anthony Van Dyck's family married into the Balcombe family, there has been a Balcombe artist.

In 1921 William Balcombe had his easel, pencils and water-colours out at Rottingdean to portray the Whipping Post House as seen across the duck pond, under the watchful eye of Morgan Rendle, his art teacher. A young red-headed man stopped to look at the emerging picture and started asking about an earlier William Balcombe from the Whipping Post House who became host to Napoleon on St Helena. Bracken had already been reading the history of great men by great men and had a copy of Prime Minister Rosebery's **Napoleon**, which states, 'Miss Betsy Balcombe, however, is the girl whose name occurs most frequently in the St Helena records. Twenty-three years after the Emperor's death, under her married name of Mrs Abell, she published her recollections of his exile. Her father, Mr Balcombe was a sort of general purveyor, sometimes called by courtesy a banker; and the traditions of the island declared him to be a son of George IV. Napoleon lived at this gentleman's villa, while Longwood was being prepared for his reception, and there made acquaintance with his two daughters. Betsy was about fifteen...She boxed his ears, she attacked him with his own sword.'

More recent biographies of Napoleon had described William Balcombe as the agent of the East India Company on St Helena from whence he had to leave when discovered to be involved in a plot to let Napoleon escape from the island. Anybody else would have expected to end up in the Tower-of-London on charges of treason. But George IV was much influenced by his ADC, Col Stephen Balcombe, William's brother, so the royal guardian of, and probably the father of the disgraced East India Agent arranged for him to go as Treasurer to the government of the new territory in Australia. This was an exalted version of transportation in the hulks.

The Balcombes, however, prospered in Australia, and achieved such colonial eminence that monuments were raised and mountains were named after them. When Brendan Bracken arrived in Australia from Ireland, he found that in 1911 William Balcombe's granddaughter Mabel had married another local notable, later to reside at Government House as Sir Norman Brookes. In 1969 Dame Mabel Balcombe, alias Lady Brookes, gave the family home, The Briars, on St Helena to the French nation but not complete with its fittings since Napoleon's imperial-crowned china he gave to Betsy Balcombe, still remains with the Balcombes of Rottingdean.

It is not clear whether it was Mabel Balcombe who inspired Brendan Bracken to search out the Balcombe roots in Rottingdean in 1921, but the art student William Balcombe would not stop painting to have yet another long discussion with the red-headed youth or explain the acrimonious lawsuit over property which bedevilled the family history. By 1979 Rottingdean's parish clerk, Fawdrey Thomas, had become an acclaimed local historian and authority on the Balcombes and he corresponded frequently with Lady Brooke's family in Australia. The historian's Balcombe researches got caught up in a further High Court dispute, but Mr Justice Jupp and his jury never got as far as listening to an examination of the Australian documents. The trial had actually begun and Fawdrey Thomas's ability as an historian explained to the jury, but it was a trial the government could not allow to continue for the simple reason that Anthony Blunt's immunity prevented him from giving evidence vital to the trial. The **Sunday Times** investigator, Barrie Penrose, was in the court and afterwards explained in his book on Blunt how the Russian spy's non-appearance caused the trial to collapse.

Not only did Anthony Blunt know what Dil de Rohan and I were doing in the war for Brendan Bracken's Ministry of Information, but he had clashed with the Rottingdean Balcombes in the mid-1960s over the forming of a new architectural department at London University, which was Blunt's employer and Dil's landlord.

In 1943 Morgan Rendle was back in Rottingdean with sketching students, one of whom was George Balcombe, son of the artist William. By this time Morgan Rendle had married another of his art students, Joy Griffiths from Wittersham, and their son Timothy Rendle became George Balcombe's fellow architectural student. Rottingdean seemed to feature the persistence of eternal recurrence in all these people's lives and mine, and perhaps why we enjoyed Ouspensky's theme of eternal recurrence in his books. For example, when I was researching my books in the British Museum Reading Room, Joy Rendle would ask George Balcombe to read aloud to Peter Harris. And George was the second strong man needed to get Peter in and out of his wheelchair when Peter had a tryst in Ovingdean Church, where George was

also organist for a time. And it was George Balcombe who phoned for an ambulance in 1977 when I was found poisoned.

Fittingly enough the only painting I still have from Tredegar Park reveals Evan's obsession with death. The oil painting is indeed a **nature mort**. Barely visible in sinister gloom, a human skull, a knife, a box of matches and a chemist's bottle of poison stand on the table, symbols of a violent death at another's hand. Evan did not need a second sight to know that his pompous cousin, John Morgan, longed to be the owner of Tredegar Park. Indeed, indecently few days after the last fashionable requiem was said in fashionable London churches for Evan's departed fashionable soul, John Morgan's personal standard fluttered from his Rolls Royce as he went around the country besmirching Evan as having been 'so terribly mean' about money and wicked about sex.

When Evan's black mass adventures in and out of Rome's Protestant Cemetery became too much for his friend the Pope, Evan returned to Wales and married, not simply because the Holy Father had advised him to do so, but because Evan genuinely wanted a son and heir to stop the pretentious cousin John Morgan becoming the next Lord Tredegar. Family fighting and feuding over wills and lovers did not always involve rushing to the High Court for injunctions. The bad blood often led to murder, and in my experience of the elite socialite world the preferred and proven way of murdering people without the inconvenience of an inquest was by poison.

Books published about Evan's communication with the dead aim to explain the domestic backgrounds of the house-parties and the guest lists, rather than make analyses of the black mass as such. The ritual as observed by Evan's fellow high priest, Aleister Crowley, tells all, for Crowley made no secret about what went into the unholy communion cup. Many celebrants used a chalice set inside a human skull for their communion cup, although various ingredients, apart the the essential blood and semen, could be used.

Evan in my mind will always be associated with Peter Churchill and Felix Yussupov. The others had lost their fortunes but before the wicked Labour Government nationalised the Tredegar coalmines and put income tax up to 19/6 in the pound, Evan entertained Russian princes in a manner reminiscent of their pre-Revolution splendour. In his homosexual sadism he even resembled Felix Yussupov, the Russian prince surrounded by so many myths I have heard or read about, some of which I was able to sift through when **Rasputin: The Man Behind the Myth** by Maria Rasputin came to me for review. Had Yussupov killed Rasputin, cut off his penis, and dumped the mutilated body in the river, simply because the mystic priest had rejected Yussupov's overtures?

If I got to Wales from Ireland in 1944 too late to know Evan in his

flamboyant heyday, Brendan Bracken made a timely appearance and used his eccentric host as a spring-board into higher society than that provided by Rottingdean School. Bracken's biographers, as well as spy-catching authors, have failed to understand Evan's influence. One author who interviewed me about Brendan Bracken wrote of Dil de Rohan as 'the woman with close friends in high places in Germany who was suprisingly nominated by Brendan Bracken to take over the Swiss desk at the Ministry of Information in World War II'. Dil acquired many of her close friends in Nazi Germany largely through Mary Oliver and she too was accepted at Bracken's ministry.

When Mary Oliver became a widow in 1938 Dil urged her to return to her native America which she did. An author alive today with an international reputation of Moroccan music and other culture, as well as the wiles of Mary Oliver, is Paul Bowles. In his 1989 biography of Bowles, Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno wrote, 'Toward the end of the summer another complication arose. Bowles received a letter from his former benefactress, Mary Oliver, informing him that she and her German maid would be arriving in New York soon and requesting a place to stay for an indefinite period of time. She was now a widow, her husband having died the year before, and also in financial straits herself. In her letter to Bowles she informed him that although a bit down on her luck she had enough money for "beer and champagne" if he had enough for food. While he sensed at the time that a prolonged stay could lead to complications, he wrote back saying that she was indeed welcome. She had been so generous to him when he was penniless in Paris...'

Paul Bowles had first met Mary's mother, the remarkable Mary Crouch in 1925 when his grandparents described her as 'an unscrupulous adventuress' and 'an immoral woman.' This amazing adventuress was a half Cree Indian with domineering manner that captivated George Gurdjieff as well as Paul Bowles. In order to shock the Bowles family further, Mrs Crouch got the young Paul a forged passport and saw him off to the Paris of Erik Satie and Andre Gide. Her own daughter and namesake had married Jock Oliver, 'a department store heir' and lived with him in Pembroke Lodge.

Dil wrote, 'there are two royal lodges in Richmond Park, White Lodge where King George VI was born and Pembroke Lodge. It is a big house of fifty-two rooms with private garden of fourteen acres in extent laid out by the experts of Kew Gardens and planted with some of the rarest plants in the world.' When Paul Bowles came to London he stayed at Pembroke Lodge and Mary Oliver 'put at Bowles's disposal a car, chauffeur, and footman.'

Mary Oliver was used to high living by the time she arrived in New York in 1938 as a poor widow with her German maid expecting Paul Bowles and his wife Jane to put them up. When she landed Mary booked herself and the German maid into the very expensive Waldorf Towers and invited the

Bowles couple to dinner. Sawyer-Laucanno takes up the story, 'As the weeks of continual drunkenness and mounting bills continued, Bowles became more and more concerned. But the more upset he became, the more Jane and Mary Oliver seemed to delight in it. In fact, Jane had grown extremely close to her drinking companion, constantly defending her from Bowles's criticisms. By mid-October he decided he could endure the situation no longer and moved out.' But however close Jane came to Mary Oliver, there was always an extremely possessive Princess de Rohan in the background ready to use her fists to defend her rights.

Were Dil and Mary Oliver part of a 'mostly homosexual set of aristocratic pro-Soviets that included Anthony Blunt, Guy Burgess, Peter Churchill and Louis Mountbatten'? This opinion was in the blurb of a book on which I had spent many hours with the publisher as well as its author, supplying them with copies of letters and tape-recordings I had with Dil, who was dead by then, and with still-living politicians. Outsiders inevitably found it difficult to follow the long and complicated story because so many of Dil's friends became her bitter enemies. This meant that one set of Dil's letters in an American university might praise Francis Rose in glowing terms, while another set such as those written after Buster Crabb's disappearance, revile Rose as a crook Dil wanted locked up.

One of the regular guests at Pembroke Lodge was H G Wells who introduced his **Realist** magazine colleague, George Catlin, another leading political figure of the Left. Catlin's other associate, Rebecca West, delighted to tell the story of a titled judge being introduced as 'The husband of **The Constant Nymph**.' Dil's introduction of Sir George Catlin was as 'The husband of Vera Brittain', who wrote **Testament of Youth**, though the author's agent David Higham always termed it **Testicles of Youth**.

Catlin, his wife and daughter Shirley, the Labour politician, then belonged to Chelsea's smart Left-wing set, yet in **For God's Sake Go**, Catlin admits, 'I saw most of Sir Francis Rose, the painter.' Catlin points out that Rose was 'not unconscious of the aura of royalty' and Rose had Queen Mary visit his Cheyne Walk studio. This had been arranged by Queen Mary's favourite Bohemian, Evan Tredegar who waited with friends in a room over the studio with buckets of water. Just as Rose started to show his latest paintings to the Queen, drips of water came from above and then chaos as the water flowed.

Catlin concludes, 'I was never told whether Queen Mary's sense of humour rose to the occasion - she was a stern lady, with a long knobbed umbrella which she was capable of using- but that Sir Francis himself was thrown into a condition of near-panic I do know.'

Catlin gives charming vignettes of Francis Rose's friends, such as,

'Very different were occasional lunches, in what I believe was the old home of Lord John Russell where Bertrand was brought up, with its marvellous view of Richmond Park, where Mary Oliver, daughter of Baldwin's favourite historian, and the Princess de Rohan were hostesses. They amused themselves with the Tarot card and discovered that I was "the White Knight".'

Keeping house-parties amused by telling fortunes at Tredegar Park or doing the Tarot cards at Pembroke Lodge formed part and parcel of the famous statesman and men of letters crowding Gurdjieff's rooms in the Rue des Colonels Rénauds. Everybody wanted signs of the times and the owl of good omen to fly in at the window as that bird often literally did at Tredegar Park. But whatever skills Dil and Mary Oliver had in the black arts they turned out to be human after all notwithstanding the amount which has been written before and since about Mary's levitation. Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno summed the 1939 New York scene, 'Although no one was ever an actual witness to her physical rising in the air, she continually claimed that she was quite capable of leaving her body.'

But just as nobody could deny the extraordinary drop in temperature when Evan Tredegar commanded the spirits of the dead, so there was always clairvoyance of some nature when Mary had started on her second bottle of gin and all sorts of spirits came out of her geni bottle making her higher than any possible levitation.

During the war Richmond Park was closed to the public and admission was strictly by passes given by the security department at the War Office. Amongst the ancient oaks of the park was Sir Watson Watt's top secret radar station as well as a bomb disposal unit that collected the unexploded bombs from all over London to make safe in the grounds. There were batteries of guns and searchlights and Pembroke Lodge itself became the Commandos' GHQ, so that the butler had to carry Princess de Rohan's breakfast tray to a far wing. Dil liked to be served by menservants. It put the male species in proper place.

Dil wrote in *How Do You Do?*, 'My unaccustomed idleness irked me and when the Ministry of Information gave me a choice of two jobs I went up to London to go into the matter leaving Mary at Pembroke Lodge with guests in the house and a butler. At six in the morning I received a telephone call from Captain Fitzwilliam, adjutant of the Commandos. "I've bad news for you" he said. Yes it was bad alright. During the night the house caught fire and been burnt to the ground. Mary escaped with half of what she stood up in. Katusha and I lost everything we possessed. This final catastrophe broke my heart. I doubt if I have ever been really happy since. There have been pleasant, interesting and amusing hours but never a happy one. If in the subsequent bombing I appeared to have courage it was simply that I did not care.'

Dil may well have been less bitter and cynical and generally happier before I met her in 1944, for then she was already living in rented rooms at Selwyn House near her job in the Ministry of Information. She hated having to tramp up so many stairs to what were once the maids' bedrooms, and certainly Dil would never again have her own butler. After the war she returned to design for Pierre Balmain's in Paris and began writing her autobiography. Katusha and Dil had first met Gertrude Stein and Alice B Toklas in 1926, but it was not until 1948, after Gertrude's death, that Dil and Alice became enthusiastic friends and Francis Rose edited Dil's book before I typed it years later at Selwyn House where Katusha was living with Mary Oliver's son, John Willis. An important part of *How Do You Do?* asserts that she and Katusha had lost 'everything we possessed' in the Pembroke Lodge fire.

The numerous paintings that crammed the walls and the hand-painted Austrian furniture that jammed the attic flat at Selwyn House were Francis Rose's from the house he had shared with Ernst Röhm, and there too hung the pictures baptised by the flooded ceiling in Queen Mary's presence. The story of Evan's practical joking accompanied any explanation to visitors of Rose's possessions. The dispute over those possessions, and in particular over the pictures, did not reach the lawyers' offices until Dil evicted Rose following Buster Crabb's failure to surface from his inspection of the Russian warship's hull.

Restrained by the fear of being sued for libel, Rose could not express his burning hatred of Dil and Mary Oliver in his book *Saying Life*, so he hurt them as viciously as he knew how by attacking the sacred, the dead George Gurdjieff. Rose wrote, 'Yet another was Gurdjieff, who claimed great powers and who had Katherine Mansfield as a follower, was consulted by Hitler, and still has a group of admirers in England. The first time that I met him was in Monte Carlo, when he told me, while munching raw garlic which he used like chewing gum, that he had known Rudolf Steiner and was a friend of Gainon, the great student of Eastern thought who had retired from the world into a Sufi centre in Egypt. He offered to give me a letter of introduction to Gainon, who I later found out did not know him. The only impression that Gurdjieff made on me was to give me an unpleasant feeling that he was pretending to be mysterious and used the hypnotic force from his eyes in a selfish and unscrupulous manner. He seemed to be a literate reproduction of Rasputin; he too was a Russian peasant. With his massive, cannon-ball head and great physical strength he resembled an unpeaceful Buddha - he claimed to be able to lift an ox. He had developed a bewildering theory of life, derived from a muddle of oriental texts.'

Cecil Beaton thoroughly understood Francis Rose so no wonder the

photographer took special precaution when editing his diaries for their 1961 publication. Beaton's biographer, Hugo Vickers, wrote, 'He did not spare the dead in his past but he was cautious of old friends such as Francis Rose and Daisy Fellows, who, he thought, would sue at the slightest provocation.' Dil and Mary Oliver got many letters from Rose in which he threatened to sue for libel or for re-possession of his pictures, and it was always I who had to deal with such letters. Rose was bluffing, of course, because I knew that any court hearing would necessarily have exposed murky doings by Rose himself and his friends with consequent embarrassment to people in high places.

At first, however, Cecil Beaton was impressed with Rose and his painting, and wrote in his 1938 diary, 'Rose is someone I have always wanted to meet. A painter who occasionally produces a really wonderful picture. An Englishman living in France and China who looks like Toulouse-Lautrec and in graces is of the Horace Walpole period and in manner like an intelligent spinster. He is in character and tastes very like Miss Stein and Miss Toklas.'

Towards the end of Beaton's life Rose was one person who Beaton did not want to meet for apart from having to hand out money there was the danger of involvement with Rose's 'rough trade.' This mainly consisted of the young Irish labourers, usually unemployed, with whom the baronet slept before storming Dil's Bastille at Selwyn House in an attempt to seize another Rodin drawing from his confiscated stock that would pay for the next drinking bouts with the next Irish peasants. Rose's use of the word 'peasant' in *Saying Life* to describe both Rasputin and Gurdjieff amused me as much as it offended Dil and Mary Oliver. By the time *Saying Life* came out, to be sent-up in the *Sunday Times* by that other long-term resident of Selwyn House, Cyril Connolly, three books of mine had been published which Rose dismissed as 'the latest from the slums of Belfast.' But I was as pleased to be an Irish peasant as Rose was to boast in April Ashley's restaurant, 'Don't you realise I'm the fourth Baronet! My mother was the daughter of a French count!' But the all-important letters the Gray's Inn Police wanted to see about the theft of Rose's pictures were addressed to me by Dil de Rohan.

If nobody witnessed Mary Oliver in a state of levitation, many besides Francis Rose, experienced the sudden rise of Dil's anger if she went into her living room at Selwyn House and found that somebody had so much as moved one of the pictures or helped themselves uninvited to her favourite Teacher's Whisky. Returning after four years' absence in Paris, Dil was outraged at what she saw. She called the living room a doss-house because John Willis had been sub-letting to every young man who took his fancy, many of whom took fancies to the pictures. I heard of Dil's predicament in a strange way.

My elder sister Margaret was then living in Clanricarde Gardens in Bayswater with her architect husband and young son, Clive Cressy. Happy

to be a grandmother, my mother got into the habit of spending part of the year in England, and I often went into Kensington Gardens with her and wheeled the baby's pram. Naturally she wanted baby Clive to be photographed and, good Ulsterwoman that she was, where else could they pose but beside the statue of King William III, Ulster's own King Billy, beside Kensington Palace.

Photographs done, we were continuing our walk one day when suddenly there was a skidding of brakes from the road outside the gardens, and then screams and shouts of two women, Dil and Mary Oliver. I did not rush over. Apparently, with the help of Phoebe Pool, one of Anthony Blunt's staff at the Courtauld Institute, Dil had traced one of her missing Picasso drawings to a house in Kensington and they were returning triumphantly to Selwyn House when a dog crossed the road and Dil braked suddenly. Dil was a passionate dog-lover, but Phoebe Pool was also a passionate Picasso lover and would one day write a book on the painter in conjunction with Blunt.

The sudden jerk had saved the dog's life, but John Willis's knee had gone through the picture-frame glass, severely damaging the Picasso. A great deal of gin had been swallowed by then as it was late forenoon so Dil and Mary Oliver instead of comforting John Willis over his cut leg started beating him up. But as with all their fights, it ended by Dil and Mary attacking each other.

When I explained to my mother that one of them was a princess, she could not believe that two women could so ferociously and shamefully go for the other's genitals and hair. My mother had assaulted Jeannie McIlroy over the love of Billy, but that had merely required blood-sucking leeches from the chemist, whereas Dil and Mary both subsequently claimed that the fight in Kensington Gardens was the beginning of their many cancer operations. Whenever I went abroad after that, I had the solemn responsibility of bringing back metal charms and exvotos shaped like breasts to ward the evil eye off Dil and Mary.

They fought to show the world in general and in particular the drinkers in the Lamb pub at Bloomsbury that women had body power as well as bed attraction. They never forgot their heyday when Catherine Devilliers - Katusha to us - shared Diaghilev's fame with Anna Pavlova. Patrick McClellan had much experience of running international ballet companies and one night in the Lamb he praised Katusha for her production of John Blow's masque *Venus and Adonis* at Hampton Court around 1950. Patrick observed 'How well the singers moved' which Katusha dismissed curtly, 'Of course they would. I taught them. I was a dancer.' It demanded imagination to see any resemblance between the heavy, bouncing Katusha we knew and between the slender ballerina she had once been at the Bolshoi Theatre.

Also at Shrewsbury school with Patrick McClellan and Patrick Carey

was George Kinnaird whose youthful days figure in Daphne Fielding's biography of Rosa Lewis, the hotel keeper who said, 'We can't have Lady Kinnaird worrying about young George having a good time, and we won't have a good time without young George. So you've all got to mind your P's and Q's and not say a word to any of those dratted small-beer newspaper scribblers. We can't have them putting in a lot of lies about the goings-on here for her ladyship to read.'

But when I knew George Kinnaird his good time was not entertaining the Queen of Romania at Rosa Lewis's but his live-in Moroccan boyfriend, the Gorilla. There was certainly no question of keeping the 'small-beer newspaper scribblers' from reporting events in the criminal courts. In *The Caves of Hercules* Rupert Croft-Cooke wrote, 'the two friends were perpetually getting one another into the local house of restraint, then pleading for the offender's release to smash up more furniture in their flat.'

Not only did John Keyes make BBC recordings about my own fighting in 1939s Belfast, but he had worked in the theatre with Katusha's close friend and fellow-dancer, Anton Dolin, an expert on the violent encounters within the Diaghilev ballet company when Katusha delighted everyone as the Miller's Wife in *The Three Cornered Hat*. And the three-cornered affair between Diaghilev, his secretary-friend Boris Kochno and lover Serge Lifar always dominated conversation at those memorable Sunday-afternoon tea parties at Mark Anthony's flat whenever a newcomer to the ballet scene appeared. Although not Diaghilev's bed-pal, it was Kochno who faithfully squeezed Diaghilev's 16 abscesses while Serge Lifar chased the boys. But both watched Diaghilev die, and as Misia Sert noted, 'an essentially Russian phenomenon took place, as one finds in Dostoyevsky novels...an explosion of pent-up hatred. Kochno threw himself on Lifar who was kneeling at the other side of the bed. Shaken by rage, they rolled on the floor, tearing at each other's clothes, biting one another like wild animals; two mad dogs fighting over the body of their master.'

Rupert Croft-Cooke has speculated in print about the pianist Mark Anthony's age. Croft-Cooke met him in 1925 and somebody remarked then how 'wonderful for his age' Mark Anthony was. Forty years later the old pianist made his teenage Arab boyfriend, Croft-Cooke and me jump to attention as the royal guard passed the Tangier pavement cafe where we sat drinking coffee. But Mark Anthony's Sunday afternoon tea-parties in London turned the spotlight on the international ballet set and the many people I took there over the years included George Balcombe whose father had for long designed for the Benson Shakespeare Company and painted some fine studies in oils of Katusha's students rehearsing. As George took a pile of cups to the host in the kitchen, Mark Anthony explained, 'I never do the drink

number dear, because they start fighting and my poor old ticker can't stand that sort of thing anymore dear.'

Mark Anthony's fellow-pianist Alfred Arnold, however, did do 'the drink number' at his Belfast flat, and there the visiting ballet dancers and singers from his musicals soon discovered the headiness of his homemade brews. The King duly decorated Alfred, but rather for his artistic activities during the 1951 Festival of Britain than for his work with the security forces and Basil Brooke. Anthony Blunt believed he had good reason to be anxious about Alfred's openly gay behaviour which ultimately forced him to leave Belfast.

Blunt's MI5 boss, Guy Liddell, being a good cellist, often went to ballet and musical events. Outsiders could not easily understand this twilight world and many things got twisted by a spy-catching author who tried to. For example, I could not possibly have gone to Minnie Cory's parties since she died over twenty years before I was born. And the after-theatre gatherings were certainly not exclusively homosexual orgies because Blunt's official brief was to keep an eye on the married, heterosexual men who showed more than a passing interest in very young ballet girls.

As a young MP, Edmond Warnock saw me act as a Roman slave girl on St Simon's stage, but as the Attorney General in 1951 he had to give me a severe 'talking to' for introducing a visiting Tory politician to a youthful ballerina known to be of 'the other side' - a Roman Catholic who shared my wicked hopes for a united Ireland.

The Russian Connection

During the summer holidays at Childhaven in the 1930s I found the learning of Scripture easy and loved the Biblical names and lists of who was begatting who. But the boasts of longevity also fascinated me because the Bryans family, as far as I was aware of it in those pre-war days, had only one small plot of land in the City Cemetery and it had only one more place, the difficulty being that my grandfather Richard Bryans, who bought the plot, had two other children beside my father, and nine grandchildren all anxious to be laid beside their forefather. Since I was the grandchild who had spent more time at the Durham Street Tuberculosis Clinic than any of the others and also had the weakest lungs, I knew the adults expected the grave to be finally sealed with my early burial.

My expected demise struck me as especially unfair because the Bryans family was noted for its longevity. Sir Shane Leslie, the Irish poet, had shocked his family and Big House friends by 'going over to the other side,' and becoming not only a Roman Catholic but a Nationalist to boot, going around in the Irish saffron kilt and daring to stand against, and indeed almost winning, the sacred seat of Derry City from the Unionist son of the Duke of Abercorn. But television viewers watching Sir Winston Churchill's funeral at St Paul's Cathedral in 1965 saw the stately and kilted Shane Leslie following his cousin's coffin, and they were looking at a man who was a much-loved figure in London society along with his fellow poet and convert Evan Tredegar.

Shane Leslie concluded his autobiography with Churchill's words, 'The longer you can look back, the further you can look forward.' Leslie lists Irish people who lived to be over a hundred years, starting with, 'There was old Buttery Hughes who as late as 1933 told me he remembered John Bryans, who was 125 years of age and had been a Yeoman whose comrades all became United Irishmen in 1798, some of whom were hung at Glaslough.'

When Ernest Bryans retired as Sub-Warden of Radley in 1919 he devoted his time to tracing his Ulster ancestors, having for many years traced those of his pupils for the **Radley Register** which he started in 1897. Ernest, who taught history, loved looking through old newspapers, and on 28 February 1755 the **Belfast Newsletter** announced the death of Peter Bryans at the age of 117 in Tynon Parish. My grandfather was proud of being Richard Bryans because there had always been, and there still is, a 'Dickie' in the family, and their namesake is recorded in Middletown Presbyterian Grave-

yard with a stone 'Erected by Richard Bryans in memory of his father John Bryans, late of Feyduff, who departed this life 28/9/1880 aged 105 years.' In 1985 another John Bryans became the family's next centenarian and in keeping with the times, the Superintendent of the North Belfast Mission, the Rev W T Buchanan, presented a 'This is Your Life' programme with many Bryans members and mission supporters. He introduced him as 'John Bryans, your very interesting life began on 20th February 1885 when at Feyduff in South Armagh, a first baby boy was born to William Andrew and Sarah Bryans... Those were the days when education was not compulsory but you did go "now and again" to Middletown Primary School. At 12 years of age you were preparing to go out into the rough and tumble of life and could not have started with a more difficult experience than that of making bricks, something like 2,000 per day I believe. I'm sure that as your knowledge of the Old Testament grew it must have struck a chord with you to note that the Israelites for whom you have a special admiration had to make bricks when they were under the heel of Pharaoh, and yet they came through.'

As a boy, I loved hearing Hellfire Jack telling his 'testimony' about making 2,000 bricks a day as a boy aged twelve, and comparing himself with the Children of Israel in Egyptian bondage. That was an added reason for his disapproval when my father mocked William Fulton's open-air services, because of course, that lawyer had featured importantly in the founding of the Egypt General Mission. While there was something Biblical about Hellfire Jack making 2,000 bricks a day at the age of twelve, nothing Scriptural came to mind when I thought of my mother at the same age spinning at Barbour's Mill from six in the morning until six at night for four shillings a week.

But my father and Jack did share a love of football and the international star, Billy Houston was there to greet his hundred-year old fan in 1985. The first encroachment on the nine marshes of the Bog Meadows came at the far end of Donegall Avenue in the 1930s with the building of the new Windsor Football Stadium. Hellfire Jack had become a confectionery representative by then and when he passed our door on his way to see his Blues team play, there would often be 'Sweeties for the childer.'

But the Rev Buchanan rightly told the 'This is Your Life' gathering that one of the great milestones in John Bryans's life had been going to hear 'a well known character called William Maguire - a Methodist Minister, otherwise known as "Orange Maguire" - I'm not sure whether that was a description which came from the colour of his hair or his affiliation to an organisation. You began to attend the North Belfast Mission on Sunday evenings to hear in York Street the dynamic preaching of William Maguire, and that was the beginning of an association which has lasted with great loyalty and devotion to this day.'

On 28 September 1915 William Maguire officiated at Jack's wedding and introduced him to preaching on the Custom House steps on Sunday afternoons which he did for the next 55 years. William Maguire's son Charles became curate-in-charge of St Simon's in 1931 and remained an important part of my family life until his death fifty years later. John MacNeice was a young cleric in a slum parish near the North Belfast Mission when his son Louis was born in 1907 and was pushed in his pram by both Orange Maguire and his son Charles. In those days, women would go to the mission and tell William Maguire that their husbands were in the pub using money meant for their barefooted children's food. Taking his stout blackthorn stick, Orange Maguire went to the pubs and forced the drinkers to hand over whatever money was left.

In 1990 the Rev William Buchanan told me that the North Belfast Mission still kept William Maguire's stick which symbolised the temperance movement's militancy and fearlessness. My last experience of the movement's uncompromising attitudes was in 1964 when the Stormont Government launched my book *Ulster*. Invitations went to Canon Maguire and Hellfire Jack and although we had an agreeable meal beforehand they did not come to the reception because it was an 'alcohol do.'

This preaching against the demon drink had partly given Belfast its image of extreme drunkenness on the one hand and extreme abstinence on the other. When the Dublin wit and author, Patrick Campbell reviewed one of my books in the *Sunday Times* during 1961, he wrote harshly of the city under the headline **Grim Belfast Boyhood** which caused some resentment. But it was not Billy McIlroy's letter which was published in reply but one from the many English people who appreciate Belfast's way of life. For my mother the most thrilling thing ever written about my work appeared in St Simon's parish magazine, ending, 'As the rector remarked in his sermon at the C.L.B. enrolment service, Bobby Bryans holds our company of the C.L.B. in fond remembrance. Indeed it might be said that every brick and stone in our church, the organ, the music and the parishioners are all dear to him. He is being given an honoured place in our Parish History.'

In a dozen travel books I had written of strange and beautiful experiences of amazing landscapes and of violent history. I had written about Gurdjieff and about another sort of violence such as the weird Rev Frank Shelley-Mills being whipped by soldiers and about Lord Tredegar whipping sailors, but all these exotic and erotic happenings never diminished the pride I felt in being remembered as Charles Maguire's parish orphan of the 1930s and 40s.

Dil de Rohan wrote to me from Spain in 1965 'It seems Sir George Clark is no longer King of the Orange pips' and so I realised that the twelve-year old boy who made 2,000 bricks a day, John Bryans, had become the first,

non-titled Imperial Grand Master of the Orange Order. In this way the stranglehold of the Big Houses on Ulster's Unionist movement had been broken. But perhaps this was not so much the triumph of more liberal attitudes as the defeat of the Big Houses themselves as a way of Irish life.

Dil de Rohan missed the Big Houses with their liveried servants, while the fact that she and Mary Oliver would never again be celebrated hostesses at Pembroke Lodge cast a lifelong shadow over them. Dil had made frequent visits to Ulster but these stopped altogether with the demise of another house, Ecclesville. Ever since girlhood Dil had loved being taken to Ulster by her guardian, Lord Ernest Hamilton, although the ducal Baronscourt in County Tyrone never offered the delights that awaited her in the same county at Ecclesville presided over by Raymond Lecky-Browne-Lecky, affectionately called 'Tibby.'

Dukes and heiresses came on pilgrimage to this social Mecca and to have more than their fortunes told by Evan Tredegar for Tibby was a revelation in himself. After nearly six years of war the Big House set only felt it was really over when Ecclesville opened its doors once again, although when the local newspaper reported the occasion the house and its owner were seen to be worse for wear, 'From the standpoint of culture this was a most delightful treat, and Mr Lecky-Browne-Lecky entertained upwards of 120 guests. The spacious reception rooms with their beautiful floral decorations were much admired by all.'

Tibby's mother had wanted a daughter and when she got a son she dressed him as a girl even after babyhood. Tibby found a niche for his transvestism in adult life by becoming a much-in-demand actress in amateur theatricals. For decades the Irish newspapers photographed Tibby in female roles such as Lady Windermere created of course by Oscar Wilde whose own mother had put him into girls' clothes because she too had wanted a daughter. In old age, Tibby 'dresses with a faded effeminate elegance' according to Mark Bence-Jones who got the story of my own life, as well as Tibby's, from the other County Tyrone host, Peter Montgomery of Blessingbourne, and recorded Tibby's grandeur at Ecclesville and my own 'childhood in the slums of Belfast' for his books.

Someone who had heard Oscar Wilde himself fill her family homes with his boisterous wit was Adeline Lister-Kaye, the great aunt of the present Earl of Rosse. In 1949 Adeline was living in Canada and I took her papers from there to her Aunt Newcastle's house in Windsor Great Park, Aunt Newcastle being Oscar Wilde's 'My Duchess.' In the 1980s many of these papers went to the Muniment room at Birr Castle where the Archivist of the Public Records of Northern Ireland travelled to sort them out for Adeline's great-nephew, Lord Rosse. My relationship with the Newcastles was plain

enough for all to see, but some people liked to weave fantasies around its origins. Wyn Henderson was one. She had indeed surrounded herself by as many famous and rich lovers as John Mortimer claimed she had, but because some of these lovers had known me and my family from when I was very young, there was no reason for supposing that I was their illegitimate child.

Wyn had reluctantly to accept as undeniable the fact that I spent the first twelve years of my life as an orphan in St Simon's parish in Belfast, for her poet lover Bertie Rodgers had written so much about my early life. But Wyn decided that I was only the foster-child of the window-cleaner in Donegall Avenue and that I had been born at the Duke of Newcastle's Ulster estate, Blayney Castle. How else, she declared, could I have such access to the Newcastle world and be Adeline's literary executor.

One of Bertie Rodgers's still-living friends and fellow-poets Robert Greacen, was the nephew of our local newsagent and he too went to St Simon's School run by Canon Maguire. Ever since my first book appeared, Robert Greacen has been an enthusiast over my work, expressing this through many reviews in such places as *The Listener*. Greacen and I kept track of each other's doings through three decades and as recently as October 1989 he wrote about the difficulty we both had at the BBC because we 'retained so little trace of a Belfast accent that Boyd (the Irish producer) kept twitting us with being Englishmen... At the time of the first meeting he [Robin Bryans] was living in Nottingham for some reason I never discovered. There was always a faint air of mystery about the man'.

In fact I was living in Nottingham on the Duke of Newcastle's estate because Great-aunt Adeline had come to roost at Womersley Park with her great-nephew Lord Rosse's brother, Martin Parsons who still lives there today. The papers Mr Brian Neill QC laid before the High Court showed I was more than Adeline's literary executor. Wyn Henderson not only bedded her notable lovers and published others at the Hours Press, but she became mediator in one of the early 1930s most celebrated scandals.

As early as 1911 Sir Thomas Beecham and his symphony orchestra had brought the music and dance of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes to Covent Garden with both Anna Pavlova and Catherine Devilliers. In his biography of Beecham, Charles Reid states of the Drury Lane season of Russian opera with Chaliapin, 'Drury Lane became fashionable and obligatory. The crowned or coroneted heads who were intrigued or bludgeoned into the Drury Lane boxes by Lady Cunard drew at their heels crowds of snobs and starers. Furthermore there was a great hiving-in of intellectuals.... Not all the celebrities wore tiaras or the Garter sash. During intervals a curious figure was seen to stalk through the foyer. She wore a short corduroy skirt, a white silk shirt and a small hat perched on her massive head. Her name was Gertrude Stein.'

Lady Cunard being American always invited her rich friends Lady Randolph Churchill from New York, the Duchess of Manchester and her sister Lady Lister-Kaye from their many estates across America and Cuba. One head Lady Cunard soon found difficult to get into the opera house was that of her only child Nancy. The only coroneted head Nancy would listen to was Evan Tredegar's. Daphne Fielding not only wrote a biography of Lady Cunard but also of that other famous London hostess of the period, Rosa Lewis, who rose from being a cook to owning the fashionable Cavendish, and Daphne Fielding reports how Rosa defended him, 'Pansies?' she snaps, 'And who the hell do you think you are? I saw you leching after that Lady Chatterley, like a tom cat on hot bricks. And when it comes to calling young Evan names, I'd just like to ask where I'd be if it wasn't for pansies like him who pay the bills for scrimshanking buggers like you.'

At one of her mother's grand balls in 1922, Nancy Cunard cornered another American, T S Eliot and danced with the Prince of Wales. But Nancy decided to use her Hours Press to expose the realities of society. This attracted Ezra Pound whose first thirty cantos she published in 1930. T S Eliot had married into upper-class snobbery with disastrous results. During 1921 Ezra Pound edited a draft of *The Waste Land* and persuaded his fellow poet to cut out sections of the *Fire Sermon* which featured a rich society girl Fresca who wanted to be a writer. Fifty years later when the facsimile edition of Eliot's drafts for *The Waste Land* was published, the ridiculed society poetess was taken to be Nancy.

If Ezra Pound silenced Eliot in the 1920s there was no way of holding the floodgates of Nancy Cunard, who had become a rebel who craved the storm. No published work exposes the racist situation of those days so much as Nancy's pamphlet addressed to her mother, *Black Man and White Ladyship*. Nancy was openly living in Paris with the black jazz musician Henry Crowder when Margot Asquith, Countess of Oxford, arrived at the Cunard house in Grosvenor Square and greeted her hostess with, 'What is it now? - drink, drugs or niggers?'

After consultation with that other Hours Press poet, Brian Howard, Nancy opened her pamphlet by quoting remarks made by her mother. 'Does anyone know any Negroes? I never heard of that. You mean in Paris then? No, but who receives them... What sort of Negroes, and what do they do? You mean to say they go into people's houses?' Nancy sent this attack on her mother's snobbery to hundreds of people, including old dancing partners such as the Prince of Wales and Peter Churchill. Brian Howard got his friend W H Auden, also published by the Hours Press, to write, 'I did enjoy *Black Man and White Ladyship* so much.' Howard wrote to his own mother, 'I quite understand Nancy. Her mother had been "asking for it" from Nancy, by

behaving vilely to her and her friends, for years... I think it is going to create an explosion such as has never been known, and will very likely be her end "socially." (It is going to everyone and is being printed here - I am helping.) Take heart, because I'm not mentioned in anyway, indirect or direct.'

The publication of **Black Man and White Ladyship** could have been seen not only as Nancy Cunard's response to 'personal vendettas' and 'unprovoked malice' preached by Sir Maurice Bowra at Oxford. Noel Annan wrote, 'Before the war he (Bowra) had led the vanguard of the Immoral Front. The term, invented by himself, embraced all those of whom the smug Establishment of the age of Baldwin disapproved - Jews, homosexuals, people whose odd views, or way of life, or contempt for stuffiness made disreputable.' Nancy wanted Brian Howard to write further attacks on the Establishment, by attacking conventional views on homosexuality, religion and even the royal family so beloved by her mother.

Like that of her friend, Dil de Rohan, Lady Cunard's income had been severely slashed by the Wall Street crash of 1929 and so Nancy's allowance had to be reduced accordingly. Fearful that her mother would cut off all supplies so forcing the Hours Press to close, Nancy consulted two people who knew Lady Cunard and her set. Brian Howard and the woman described by Evelyn Waugh as the 'astonishing fat Mrs Henderson.' Just as Nancy Cunard used the Hours Press to promote her black lover's music, so Wyn used it to promote Havelock Ellis. Phyllis Crosskurth, Ellis's biographer, shows him describing Wyn as 'dangerous.'

It was at Harold Acton's house that Waugh met Wyn Henderson and when John Mortimer asked Acton in a 1987 **Daily Telegraph** interview if he thought Brian was a spy like Guy Burgess, Acton replied, 'Of course I think he might have been. He would have done it out of a sense of devilment.' Because Harold Acton had been so involved with many of the people I have portrayed in this book I asked him to give his opinion about published material where I believed the authors had not troubled to research properly. In one of my letters to him I referred to the Mortimer interview about Brian Howard doing things out of a 'sense of devilment,' and added, 'How true! How "Hat" Howard adored jumping out of doorways at Evan Tredegar and sticking pieces of birds' nests through old Lady Tredegar's letter box because for years she imagined herself to be a bird. You use the right word "devilment".' Acton replied, 'I am relieved I did not make a fool of myself, but Mortimer is a genial character, unlike poor Brian Howard.'

Evelyn Waugh said Howard was 'mad, bad and dangerous to know' and drew from both Harold Acton and Howard for the character of Anthony Blanche in **Brideshead Revisited**. Could Howard be dangerous? He once asked the British Consul in Athens to bring an action against a doctor who

failed to cure the gonorrhea Howard had picked up from a Greek sailor. The Brian Howard I knew was a true devotee of Maurice Bowra's creed of 'personal vendettas, unprovoked malice.' So Nancy Cunard at the Hours Press consulted two people, Brian Howard and Wyn Henderson each described by different authors as 'dangerous,' what to do about Lady Cunard's reaction to **Black Man and White Ladyship** as well as Nancy's reduced income. Someone had to attempt restoration of wrecked relationships. After all, Nancy was Lady Cunard's only child but not necessarily only heir.

The person chosen for this, or who most probably volunteered for it was Wyn Henderson. How Wyn in 1963 loved to recall that Grosvenor Square meeting as she and her monk and Bertie Rodgers sipped my homemade wine. At the 1931 meeting there was nothing but the best champagne as Lady Cunard asked of her daughter's lover, 'Tell me...is he really black?' Wyn went on at great lengths to explain what an intelligent negro Henry Crowder was besides being such a good business partner at the Hours Press. But as Lady Cunard so looked forward to having grandchildren and Nancy being her only source for such heirs, she questioned Wyn further on the all-important subject of Crowder's negro blood, 'Is his hair very...'

Wyn's own hair went white early and she adored stroking most men's heads. Typically, Wyn answered that Henry Crowder's head of hair was just like 'a lovely little black astrakhan cap.'

Lady Cunard had been given the name Maud at birth but felt it did not do her social position in England justice so she became known as Emerald. Wyn Henderson returned to Paris and Emerald Cunard turned to more urgent matters, as biographer Daphne Fielding states, 'one throbbing week Emerald was like a Faberge bird about to lay a jewelled Easter egg' because two of her favourites, Prince George, Duke of Kent, and the Irish beauty, Lady Bridget Parsons had fallen in love and intended to marry. Daphne Fielding had previously been the Marchioness of Bath and in a better position than Evelyn Waugh to write the inside story of Emerald Cunard's special set of the 1930's. She concludes the story of Bridget Parsons's royal marriage plans, 'Emerald was like a child with a burst balloon when Bridget told her that she felt unable to accept the responsibilities of a royal marriage.'

The Bridget Parsons I knew was trustee of the Deptford Institute in the East End of London, doing similar work as Hellfire Jack Bryans at the North Belfast Mission. Bridget learnt a lot from her 'Dearest Aunt Ad' as she called her mother's elder sister, Adeline Lister-Kaye, another trustee of the Deptford Institute. Forty years after Bridget broke off her marriage plans, Adeline read her niece's explanation as given in Daphne Fielding's book, and she wrote to me, 'This is the kind of derisive remark Bridget would have made to the Cunard set if anyone had referred to her romance with the Duke of Kent, as

if she did not wish to be bored with the dreary round of royal responsibilities and duties. That her love for him kept her from marrying anyone else seems to be a likely explanation for her lifelong unhappiness and became the cause of her over-drinking. But I cannot write about Bridget and do her justice. Hers was a tragic fate. As I see it the Emerald Cunard set led to her ruin and unhappiness. A rotten lot. The rotten one I knew best was Brian Howard.'

Without seeing any of the relevant papers on the matter, others have referred to my friendship with Bridget Parsons and have given their own quite scandalous interpretations as to why Bridget did not marry the Duke of Kent. James Lees-Milne wrote more than any other author about Bridget in his books and he had been to school with Bridget's brothers Michael and Desmond as Lees-Milne states in his letter to me of 9 October 1987, 'I do remember Aunt Ad, or rather meeting her on some occasion but I do not remember mentioning her in my diaries, even those unpublished ones written subsequently to the published. I did not realise what a lot she meant to Desmond, who was one of my closest friends since we were in the same house at Eton. Michael was a year or more older than me; Desmond that much younger. His death caused me the first great grief in that we were contemporaries. Although I came to see much of Michael and I got him on to the National Trust committees, I never was as intimate with him as with Desmond and Bridget. Poor Bridget, she became impossible towards the end of her life and that, as you say, must have been largely owing to her illness. I think you did right to destroy her unkind later letters. I say this although I am greatly in favour of preserving letters. In her case the ones you burnt could only do her memory harm, for they were not the sort she would have written when younger. Even so, I must admit that Bridget, and Desmond too, were apt to be discontented, a trait they inherited, I imagine, from their mother. I never realised that Aunt Ad was so distinguished a writer. Alas, I cannot help you with recollections of her, for I did not know her.'

Adeline Lister-Kaye was the antithesis of the gushing Lady Cunard, but however unknown Aunt Ad was to the Grosvenor Square socialites, she was certainly adored by the Ukrainian and Polish refugees who crowded the Deptford Institute. At my suggestion Adeline wrote an autobiography, *My Zapiski*, partly to rectify blunders by other writers but principally to expose 'The Three Robber Baronets' as she called her father, uncle and brother.

Adeline was delighted to read Lady Randolph Churchill's published letter of 12 July 1880 to her American 'Dearest Mama' on the difficulties of match-making during that particular season which failed to produce even a baronet's younger brother as a husband for Lady Georgie Churchill. Lady Randolph wrote, 'And she is not the only one - there is one of the Duchess of Newcastle's daughters, Lady Beatrice Clinton, a nice looking girl, very well

educated and with a large fortune.... Well this is her first season and she insists on marrying Johnny Kaye's brother, Mr Cecil Kaye, a sick tiresome youth.'

Adeline, a daughter of this marriage wrote, 'Mrs Henry Hope, the grandmother, in a serious state of health and invalidism had no influence in the affair and was easily persuaded to give her consent to the marriage. And further to agree that the marriage ceremony should take place in Ulster at Castle Blaney, a clandestine ceremony attended by no one of the bride's family except her two young sisters and her fourteen year old brother, who, owing to the recent decease of his father had succeeded to the title and apparently was deemed fitting and responsible to give his teenage sister away. A term not inapplicable, perhaps. The background was full of dark and sinister figures and of quarrels, scandals, litigations - mainly over the Hope property and jewels.'

The best known of the scandals that got into parliamentary history as well as into recent books was the elopement of Lady Beatrice's grandmother Lady Lincoln with Lord Walpole. The Newcastle family had long been involved in politics, including being Prime Minister and it was 'Support of the great Newcastle family' that put William Gladstone in the House of Commons, Macauley having written of him as 'the rising hope of the stern and unbending Tories.' Can any British politician before or since have been dispatched on such a strange diplomatic mission as the twenty-seven days Gladstone spent in 1849 covering 3,000 miles searching for the Duke of Newcastle's daughter-in-law Susan, Countess of Lincoln? The Prime Minister was Sir Robert Peel, and Gladstone noted in his diary, 'Attended at Peel's in the forenoon.... a great privilege to be able to call to his aid.'

At the end of the search through Italy, Gladstone wrote, 'Poor miserable Lady L - once the dream of dreams, the image that to my young eye combined everything that earth could offer of beauty and of joy. What is she now!... the triumph of hellish wickedness over a woman of the rarest gifts, and the utter devastation of heart and home and profanation of the holy mystery of marriage. Lord have mercy upon us, Christ have mercy upon us.' As well as being the Newcastle trustee Gladstone was made guardian of Susan's children. When he became Prime Minister himself Gladstone felt acutely embarrassed by the activities of his former ward, Lord Arthur who sat as MP for Newark, the seat first offered to Gladstone by the Duke of Newcastle that led Gladstone to 10 Downing Street. Lord Arthur was 'enslaved by an unmentionable perversion' but died before being sent for trial before Lord Chief Justice Cockburn. So many of Lord Arthur's ancestors had to flee England when their homosexual affairs became known.

I can find no record whether Lord Arthur's lovers, Ernest Boulton and Frederick Park went to see *The Importance of Being Earnest* though both

would still have been young men and their acquittal in the Old Bailey still talked about as a resounding triumph for the homosexual cause. Perhaps Oscar Wilde relied too much upon Boulton's and Park's success in court when his turn came to stand in the dock accused of Lord Arthur's crime. It came as a great relief to everybody in the Clumber set that the Prince of Wales did not have to go into the witness box to explain how, at Hamburg, he had stopped the mad Lord Queensberry from horse-whipping the Foreign Secretary, Lord Rosebery, because Queensberry believed Rosebery had seduced Queensbury's eldest son who supposedly shot himself. The Prime Minister then was still William Gladstone the Clumber trustee and as early as 1864 he was writing, 'turned my back on Clumber... I wish I were without misgivings for it or what belongs to it.'

The Prince of Wales had no such misgivings and after being crowned he went weekending at Clumber. On 2 April 1988 the **Daily Telegraph** reported, 'The Marchioness of Cambridge, who has died aged 88, was the oldest member of the present royal family...(her) first encounter with royalty had occurred in 1905 when as a child of six staying at Clumber she met King Edward VII. The King laughed heartily when she fell into a coal black pond and her white dress changed to the colour of jet.' One person who did not laugh at such house-party entertainment was the duke's niece, Adeline Lister-Kaye. She wanted to comfort the frightened child. Keeping royalty amused at Clumber or in Lady Cunard's drawing-room was not Adeline's forte.

The similarity between the North Belfast Mission and the Deptford Institute went no further than soup-kitchen welfare since the Ulster hall flourished on evangelical extremism whereas the East End mission offered the elaborations and consolations of High Anglicanism. The High Church movement became popular under Prime Minister Salisbury, together with his sister lady Mildred and her husband, the Rt Hon Alexander Beresford-Hope, the MP for Cambridge University. Among Beresford-Hope's many Anglican buildings still in use today is St Augustine's College, Canterbury, and All Saints, Margaret Street, that London church so beloved of Tom Driberg and other gay churchmen. But although the fourteen year-old 7th Duke of Newcastle who gave his sister away in a secret marriage at Castle Blayney, was much influenced by Beresford-Hope, and lived on the Hope fortune, he revered his wild grandmother Susan's family.

Lady Susan Lincoln had been the only daughter of the rich Duke of Hamilton, though biographers insist that her 'Bad Blood' came from her maternal grandfather, the 'corrupt' William Beckford who seduced a sixteen-year old relation, 'Kitty', whose real name was the Hon William Courtenay. In 1811 the law eventually caught up with Kitty, now Viscount Courtenay, on a charge of sodomy, and he too fled abroad like Beckford before him. But

although Beckford was ostracised socially because of the Kitty affair, this did not stop his daughter from becoming the Duchess of Hamilton. On 7 January 1835 Gladstone wrote in his diary, 'Off at 9.5 by Tuxford to Clumber. Went out with the sportsmen, D. of N(ewcastle).. D. of H(amilton), and Lord Wm - All were very kind. D. of H. seems conservative though not ministerial. Duchess (of Hamilton) & Lady L (her daughter Susan, Countess of Lincoln) sang in the evening: a very high treat for my poor eyes.'

Singing around the pianoforte at Clumber formed part of the tradition for the music-loving Newcastles though William Gladstone was hardly pleased when the much sought after Stella with a splendid soprano voice turned out not to be Lady Arthur Pelham-Clinton but a twenty-two year old man, Ernest Boulton. One of the best known limericks of the period went;

There was an old person of Sark

Who buggered a pig in the dark

The swine in surprise

Murmured; 'God blast your eyes,

Do you take me for Boulton or Park?'

William Gladstone's greatest concern over Clumber was to ensure that the family did not over-indulge in building. Much of the great collection of art and books had come to Clumber via Susan Lincoln from her grandfather, Beckford. After the fuss caused by the affair with his schoolboy cousin Kitty, subsided, Beckford returned to England and in 1796 started to build the extraordinary Fonthill Abbey, a vast neo-Gothic country house with a megalomaniac tower, nearly 300 feet high which, sadly, fell down in 1825 and stayed down. Beckford lived at Fonthill Abbey with his favourite young men until moving to Bath where he constructed another, though more modest, tower occupied today by James Lees-Milne who wrote to me from there on 14 October 1987, 'Your letter of the 12th is intensely interesting. I conclude from the melancholy story of the Princess Doria, of which I remember hearing whispers, that the strange trait of discontent derives from the Newcastles. And does it, I wonder, come from William Beckford, from whom I know the Parsons to be descended? That might explain a lot. I have written today to Anne Rosse from whom I have heard nothing for over a month.'

Posterity is compensated for its loss over the collapse of Beckford's tower at Fonthill, by the rich gain of the chapel at Clumber erected by his descendant, the 7th Duke of Newcastle. This has survived until the 1990s, outlasting even the splendid mansion designed by Sir Charles Barry which was demolished as untenable in 1938. The red sandstone chapel, 107 feet long, arose beside the lake in 1886 when the estate remained intact, so that any bird sitting 180 feet above the ground on the tip of the spire could look over

the park's 3,400 acres and to Sherwood Forest country beyond.

Below, the chapel's interior sports stained glass by Kempe and Belgian wood carvings. Having doubtless inherited something of his Beckford ancestor's mania for towers, the duke built Clumber's chapel in his twenty-first year perhaps compensating for his youthful but unfulfilled passion to become a monk. Indeed, with Mr Gladstone as the Clumber trustee breathing heavily down his neck, the duke dutifully made a gesture at marriage at which his niece was bridesmaid. But Adeline was not deceived by what the favourite young tenors from the choir school did at the black masses. The duke's wife, Oscar Wilde's 'My Duchess', turned a blind eye to the choir school happenings, and busied herself five days a week in the hunting field and with looking after her famous kennels at Clumber and showed no interest in inspecting new boys at Radley College, unlike the duke who sat on the council there, while his friend Ernest Bryans presided as Sub-Warden ensuring that Cyril Holland's true identity as Oscar Wilde's son remained secret.

Adeline had escaped from her parents' home, Denby Grange in Yorkshire, and found a welcome at Clumber because she was perhaps the brightest intellectually but particularly because she had a good reading voice. She enjoyed reading aloud but was disappointed over the Clumber library which largely housed old, leather-bound volumes with rare illustrations kept by the duke, like William Beckford before him, as investments rather than as literature. Nevertheless, the favourite reading was always Thomas Hope's **Anastasius: Or Memoirs of a Modern Greek**. When this novel appeared anonymously in 1819 critics declared it must be by Lord Byron. Flattered no end, the poet read **Anastasius** and told Lady Blessington, 'that he wept bitterly over many pages of it,' and for two reasons - the first, that he had not written it, and secondly that Thomas Hope had.

Byron added that he would have given his 'two most approved poems to have been the author of **Anastasius**.' Jealousy drove Byron to some petty verse belittling his rival's genius. But besides his talents at various kinds of writing, Thomas Hope roused jealousy over talents of a different sort. Byron and lesser poets coveted Hope's inherited fortune. Thomas Hope belonged to a rich mercantile family of Scottish descent famous in Amsterdam for wealth of such staggering proportions that some of it could finance grandiose schemes dreamed up by the ruling House of Orange. Born to all this in 1769, Thomas deserted Amsterdam's banking halls at the age of eighteen and for the next eight years went on a tour even grander than normal taking in Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Greece, Sicily, Spain, Portugal, England, France and Germany. En route he drew and he collected. Art, not money, consumed him, or rather, he consumed art for to his knowledge he added a considerable skill of draughtsmanship. And when he came home from his travels Hope set about

using his accumulated sketches of architecture and sculpture.

Because of their great influence in Dutch national affairs the Hope family fled Amsterdam before the French invasion of 1794. By 1801 Lord Glenbervie, the politician and scholar, could describe how Thomas Hope's house was crammed with 'the most costly furniture' each piece being an original design modelled by Thomas Hope on his travel sketches and studies of Greek, Roman and Egyptian furniture, and as a whole, forming the canon of English taste in Regency design. Apart from describing Hope's house, Lord Glenbervie wrote of its owner as 'Said to be the richest, but undoubtedly far from the most agreeable man in Europe. He is a little ill-looking man about thirty, with a sort of effeminate face and manner. He has lately given the Princess of Wales a breakfast, and has given great fetes this and the last year to all the society of London.'

The presence of the Princess of Wales and other members of the royal family at Hope's house did not, however, cause nearly so much gossip as that of a commoner, a beautiful Greek youth known as Aide who seemed to be the embodiment of the Classical sculpture around Hope's house. Hope felt extremely proud of this protege even if others disapproved. Thomas Hope launched the beautiful Aide on fashionable society in 1810 the year when the French painter Antoine Dubost launched an attack on Hope's celebrated ugliness. Not content with exhibiting a portrait of Thomas and his wife Louisa Hope entitled 'Beauty and the Beast', in which Louisa is seen being offered some of the Hope jewels by a monster easily recognised as Thomas Hope, the painter makes Hope utter the words, 'I am sensible that I am a most horrible beast and that you can have no thought of me, but if you will accept of me you shall have all these riches at your disposal.'

Then, now, or at any other time, society enjoys few things more than other people's controversies, particularly acrimonious controversies, and so despite the entrance fee, anybody who regarded himself as somebody jostled at the Pall Mall Gallery to gape at the 'Beauty and the Beast' since the Prince of Wales had set the example by closely inspecting the outrageous painting. This clearly could not go on and did not go on beyond Wednesday 20 June, the day Louisa Hope's brother, the Reverend John Beresford, venting his rage at his brother-in-law's public ridicule by the cruel caricature, rent the offending canvas asunder with his stick. The artist immediately sued for a thousand guineas in damages, and the court awarded Dubost a mere five guineas which, of course insulted him as intended, for as early as 1806 the painter had shown his 'Damocles' at the Royal Academy for fifteen hundred guineas - the painting for which Hope made a successful offer.

When the Hopes came to London they brought with them a large quantity of diamonds many of which came from the French crown jewels.

These are what Dubost painted in the 'Beauty and the Beast' portrait. Only towards the end of Thomas Hope's life did his banker son Henry acquire what is known today as 'The Hope Diamond.' In 1949 the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, the shop-window of the United States, claimed in the **National Geographic** magazine, 'The fabled Hope Diamond, largest blue diamond in the world, and perhaps the best known of all, the Hope has been haunted by tragedy ever since it was smuggled out of India in the 1640s. Superstition has associated it with violent deaths and disasters striking a dozen of its owners, including two royal houses.' The unfortunate Marie Antoinette had worn this blue diamond and many others later bought by the Hopes.

Anastasius became an international best-seller and with the proceeds Thomas Hope bought a splendid pearl necklace which became known as the Anastasius Pearls. People did not forget Thomas Hope after he died. A novelist went to Hope's old country home, the Deepdene and wrote, 'on each side opened a magnificent saloon, furnished in that classic style which the late accomplished and ingenious Mr Hope first rendered popular in this country.' Benjamin Disraeli wrote that in **Henrietta Temple**, and later in 1840 he and his wife stayed at the Deepdene and the future Prime Minister told his sister in a letter how Henry Hope, Thomas's eldest son, was extending the already large house into a High Renaissance **palazzo**, 'In the midst of romantic grounds and picturesque park Hope has built, or rather is still building, a perfect Italian palace, full of balconies adorned with busts.'

By the 1840s a political movement calling itself Young England had been started at Cambridge where Henry Hope's younger brother Alexander was a student and supporter. The movement soon moved to the Deepdene and this highly romantic scheme for the shape of future British government centred around Henry Hope and Disraeli. Henry had first entered parliament in 1829. Indeed, Disraeli incorporated these political ideals as well as the Hopes' Picturesque and Italianate background into his trilogy of political novels the first of which, **Coningsby** published in 1844, he dedicated to his friend Henry Hope and stated the book was 'conceived and partly executed amid the glades and galleries of Deepdene.'

In London Thomas Hope and his sons were neighbours of the Newcastle family. Henry's daughter Henrietta Hope was in demand for her accomplished playing and singing. While not exactly down at heel the Newcastles by 1860 hardly knew where the next estate was coming from. And rather than repair the gaps in their fortunes as William Gladstone wished, by eliminating extravagance at various stately homes they already owned, the duke decided to increase their number by a **mariage de convenance** to a suitable heiress. He soon discovered where the next estate would indeed come from, or rather

from whom, because Henrietta Hope, diamonds and all, moved across the mid-Victorian chessboard of politics and married the duke's son. This might have been the fulfilment of the Hope's intense desire to become ennobled, and even though members of the Newcastle family changed their name to Hope, just as the earlier generation became Beresford-Hopes, this new **mariage de convenance** proved utterly disastrous. The misfortunes which piled on top of this loveless match were blamed on the jinx of the Hope Diamond.

Adeline Lister-Kaye wrote, 'Handsome and charming he (her ducal grandfather) brought about the family troubles by being a reckless and incorrigible gambler of mediocre intelligence who refused to take any part in public life after his brother Arthur's arrest. He was deep in debt and had been thwarted in an earlier love affair... the ducal couple were an ill-assorted pair. She vain, selfish, spoilt, half French. Although a marriage by arrangement between parents was not unusual in mid-Victorian days, the idea that she had been married for the sake of her fortune rankled in her mind. After the first few years of married life he returned to the gambling table and Henrietta to Paris and the company of singers. She wanted above all to be seen associating with her innamorato, Theobald Hohler, the singer and conductor of the Paris Opera.'

The Duchess Henrietta's five children occasionally visited her in Paris, but mostly they lived with their grandmother, Mrs Henry Hope at the Deepdene, or Clumber, or a favourite retreat, Castle Blayney in Ulster. The 5th Duke of Newcastle had first taken political office in 1846 as Chief Secretary for Ireland, and his trustee, William Gladstone, was better pleased when Henrietta's five children went to stay with the bishops and archbishops amongst their Irish Beresford relations rather than witness mask-balls at their mother's home in Paris.

In addition to Mrs Thomas Hope's father being Archbishop of Tuam, two other members of the Beresford family became Primate of All Ireland, and even the brother who slashed Dubost's caricature had been raised to the purple with numerous other Beresford relations. Whatever sex and money scandals of the Newcastle and Beckford families got into books and newspapers, the printed word always favoured the Beresford relations. Adeline grew up believing they were the only branch of the family with no scandal attached to them. Amongst the books I inherited from Louis MacNeice were the three volumes of the Church of Ireland's history. In 1967 while preparing a lecture on Bishop MacNeice at Queen's University I found Adeline looking up the passages marked by Bishop MacNeice in the official church history and read, 'The Beresford family were, of course, notorious for their greed and amassed money and jobs to an amazing extent. In an age of jobbery, they outstripped most men in Ireland.' The book went on to list every

single one of Adeline's Beresford relations who had become archbishops and bishops and the amount of church funds they had amassed for themselves. Not least among these was Mrs Thomas Hope's father who had helped himself to even more money than Thomas Hope possessed and Hope was said by Lord Glenbervie to have been the richest man in Europe.

Henrietta Newcastle returned to England as a widow in 1892 when Gladstone entered his fourth term as Prime Minister still taking Clumber and its trusteeship as seriously as ever. Gladstone's other early friends, apart from the 5th Duke of Newcastle, had been James Hope and Henry Manning, who in the 1850s became Roman Catholics, causing Gladstone to write, 'the terrible blows...not only overset & oppress me but I fear also demoralise me...A day of pain! Manning and Hope. They were my two props.' Manning became Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, and Gladstone was further depressed when the Dowager Duchess of Newcastle became a convert and started a house for training priests at Woodford.

Just as Disraeli gleaned much of the background for his novels while staying with his friend Henry Hope at the Deepdene, so Oscar Wilde culled material for numerous lines in his plays, notably in **The Importance of Being Earnest**, which made acid observations about various members of the Hopes and Newcastles. Mrs Oscar Wilde's cousin, Adrian Hope, was Oscar's close friend and neighbour in Chelsea long before being chosen as the guardian of Wilde's two sons when their father was sent to prison. One line which stabbed the former Henrietta Hope was 'Rise, sir, from this semi-recumbent position' because, as Wilde well knew, the one person who could not rise from what appeared to be a semi-recumbent position was the 7th Duke of Newcastle.

Although society willingly gazed at its own reflection in the merciless mirror Oscar Wilde held up, people adored him nevertheless before destroying him and he basked in the applause of such lines as 'I am glad to say I have never seen a spade.' A more truthful reflection of the Clumber background would have been for Wilde's character Gwendolen to boast, 'I am glad to say I have never seen a baby's bottom' for certainly in real life the Duchess of Newcastle even before her elopement to Paris never bathed her son. While still a baby, the unfortunate seventh duke was dropped by a nursemaid on the marble stairs. The terror-stricken maid should have rushed the screaming child to a senior servant who could have fetched such limited medical aid as existed in those days. The maid, of course, would have lost her job and would certainly have not been given the all-important reference for another place. So she kept her mouth shut and her job open. A year passed. Then the seriousness of the accident began to show, and by then it was too late for anything to be done about the poor boy's injured legs.

Prime Minister Gladstone was deeply concerned about this latest

misfortune at Clumber and as the trustee he wrote 'turned my back on Clumber...' Instead of writing to the unfortunate boy's mother Gladstone turned to his spiritual adviser, the extraordinary Mrs Thistlethwayte, or 'The Queen of Whoredom' as she had been justifiably dubbed, by Sir William Hardman.

Many writers describe Laura Bell as a 'Belfast shop girl,' but in fact she came from the Lisburn district where her father was bailiff to the Marquis of Hertford and in this way got to know the Duke of Newcastle's Ulster estate at Castle Blaney. It was Newcastle who introduced the young Irish beauty to Gladstone. Soon her presence at the London opera would bring the whole audience to its feet on her departure for none wished to miss a glimpse of the capital's most notorious beauty. But Laura Bell was not merely 'the greatest beauty of the age' as T H Escott, the historian of London Clubs called her. Nor was she only the innocent model of the popular picture called **The Nun**.

But Laura Bell ceased to be 'The Queen of Whoredom' when she got saved at an evangelical meeting and married a spendthrift Captain Thistlethwayte who had been in the habit of summoning servants by firing pistol shots into the ceiling. The captain could well afford to waste pistol shots because the family's vast Paddington estate had been bought at a knockdown price from the Church Commissioners. It is most apt for the young Laura Thistlethwayte's portrait to be housed at the Wallace Collection in London today, since Sir Richard Wallace was the natural son of the Marquis of Hertford, whose bailiff was Mrs Thistlethwayte's father. To escape the shame of being born on the wrong side of the blanket, Sir Richard lived mostly in Paris where he died in 1890 much mourned by his friends Henrietta Newcastle and Theobald Hohler.

Nobody could call Henrietta Newcastle 'The Queen of Whoredom' a title others might also apply to her mother-in-law Susan, whom Gladstone had chased all over Italy and who inflicted her children with the dreaded Beckford Disease. Henrietta's granddaughter Adeline Lister-Kaye wrote, 'I trace the family misfortunes back to Henrietta, unloving daughter, unloving wife, unloving mother. And perhaps she was not altogether blameworthy. I knew nothing whatever about her mother, a Frenchwoman, Mme Bichet, originally Henry Hope's mistress.' Henry's brother Alexander having married Lady Mildred Cecil in 1842, it was hoped Henry as head of the Hope banking family would marry equally well. In 1851 he was helping his friend the Prince Consort with the Great Exhibition and decided to marry Anne Bichet his mistress for many years who had borne him a love-child Henrietta Hope, in addition to other children she had by an earlier marriage. Henrietta, like her Paris friend, Sir Richard Wallace, could not help the fact that she was born out of wedlock, and as far as her sole lover Theobald Hohler went, she

married him as soon as her first husband, Newcastle, died.

The Duchess Henrietta knew the Newcastles' Ulster background not only from having lived there occasionally early in her marriage but also from many years of close friendship with Sir Richard Wallace. Nor did Gladstone need to rely entirely on Mrs Thistlethwayte's expert advice about what happened at Castle Blayney, since he had a much-loved niece, Anne, who in 1861 married the Earl of Belmore and lived on his Ulster estate with a castle full of children not far from Castle Blayney.

Mrs Henry Hope remained the sole owner of Castle Blayney and Gladstone had no rights to dictate the way of life there, so she gladly took her five Newcastle grandchildren to Ireland, away from the great marble staircase at Clumber on which the young boy had been so tragically dropped. Visits from the young and romantic Uncle Arthur with his two friends Stella and Fanny gave the children particular delight since wherever the trio went there was the sound of music. When Arthur died before the age of thirty and Gladstone's Attorney General exposed Stella and Fanny as a pair of men, the children were greatly upset.

The staircase fall had not only stunted the fourteen-year old duke's growth, earning him the pejorative title of 'Dwarf Duke,' but his disabilities entailed sterility also. To secure Newcastle heirs a Royal Licence granted the duke's younger brother Francis the extra surname and arms of Hope. All the Hope estates in England and Ireland went to the new Lord Francis Hope who quickly gambled them away and faced the bankruptcy court. Meanwhile, the Dwarf Duke, like all members of the family, blamed the Newcastle misfortunes on the Clumber trustee, Gladstone, rather than on any curse from Hope diamonds or the Beckford disease.

The duke was right in one respect. He wanted to remain with a private tutor at Castle Blayney which he loved. Gladstone's involvement with the family had originated at Eton and the trustee decided that whatever else did or did not happen, the young Newcastle should go to Eton and be treated as a normal boy. But he was not a normal boy and could not be flogged in the normal Eton fashion. The deformed lower half of his body could not be exposed, but the upper half could, because he had developed real ox-shoulders and, with few other sexual thrills, the boy loved being beaten by older boys for the misdeeds which the young duke committed in order to have more caning. Indeed, he so loved life at Eton that he bought the beautiful Forest Farm in Windsor Great Park to be close both to his friends at Windsor Castle and Eton College.

If Prime Minister Gladstone wrote that he wished he 'were without misgivings for' Clumber, the royal family had no such misgivings. Even after Lord Arthur conveniently died and Oscar went to prison, the new King,

Edward VII, still revelled in weekends at Clumber. Apart from reading to her uncle, Adeline Lister-Kaye accompanied the duke to Radley for council meetings, to High Church vicarages at nearby Oxford and during one such visit Adeline heard the idea propounded which so outraged her that it gave her life a new direction.

Oscar Wilde had left prison and died soon after in Paris. He was now seen not only as a martyr in the homosexual cause but also a genius in the same vein as Michelangelo or Cellini, because of art in combination with homosexual practices. Adeline grew even more angry when she learnt that the idea had wide-spread currency and many people equated genius with homosexuality. Adeline had no prejudice against homosexuality and felt liberty scored another victory each time some author ferreted out family secrets which her father had tried to conceal. Her fascination with Thomas Hope derived not only from his literary and aesthetic achievement but also from his defiance of hypocrisy shown by his refusal to part from the glamorous young Greek sailor Aide. Adeline completely rejected the notion that to be different was to be weak or wicked, just as she rejected the notion that to be a woman was to be weak. She demanded the right to be heard.

Adeline considered it intellectually dishonest to attribute genius to homosexuality. Quite apart from any other consideration it ignored geniuses of both sexes who were heterosexual. She thought the idea degraded the dignity of personality, and was just about on a par with the degrading custom of women being sought in the marriage market solely for the size of their dowry and their ability to breed sons. Adeline had been the first-born of three daughters who appeared before the birth of the all-important male heir at Denby Grange. It had been an indignant young Adeline, already acquainted with society's injustices against women, who left Yorkshire burning with a desire to change women's status and rights. At Oxford's high tables and High Church vicarages she had met even greater insult to her intelligence. She determined to leave the stepping-stone of Clumber and join her suffragette friends demanding 'Votes for Women.'

Her mother's sister, Florence, had been so shocked by the sight of Beatrice being given away by their schoolboy ducal brother in a secret ceremony in Ulster to the fortune-hunting Cecil Lister-Kaye that Florence decided never to marry. Her portion of Henry Hope's vast fortune would not go to maintaining a Family Place where all was subordinate to the father and his eldest male heir. Florence determined to give her Hope bank shares to the poor of the London slums and so founded the Deptford Institute. And it was here that Adeline made her headquarters, becoming its trustee, and finding abundant opportunity to preach Votes for Women and to teach English to the many European refugees flooding the East End.

The earliest printed reference I can find to Adeline's rebellion against Family Places and all they entailed about the sacred past and titled ancestors, and to her crusade for new art, new poetry, and a new role for women, is in the memoirs of Sir Almeric Fitzroy. He was Clerk of the Privy Council from 1898 to 1923 and wrote, 'Mrs Lawson had another literary and musical reunion, which began with a reply from the pen of Miss Lister-Kaye to the paper on art the week before, wherein she attempted to give post-impressionism the values of truth and to assign it a definite place in the permanent evolution of ideas. The plea was put forward with no little ingenuity and a rhetorical vivacity which gave her paper real literary interest.'

Adeline's mother had another sister Emily, who married the powerful Prince Doria Pamphilj, Duc d'Avigliano, or 'The Magnificent Alfonso' as he was known in Italy and Paris. Emily was sculpted by Canonica, a bust that stands in the Palazzo Doria in Rome, the city's only palace still owned and lived in by its family even though most of its thousand rooms are let while the splendid staterooms and picture gallery form part of the tourist itinerary. The rooms crowded by tourists today provided the setting at the turn of the century for galaxies of diplomats and socialites attending receptions given by 'The Magnificent Alfonso' with lavishness excelling anything seen at the royal Quirinal.

The beautiful Princess Emily Doria became a mother of two sons and a daughter. The elder son Filippo grew up to be a scholar and made a name for himself, independent of family influence, at Cambridge University. Earlier at Cambridge, his great uncle, Alexander Beresford-Hope had absorbed the ideas of the Young England Movement which his brother Henry and Disraeli developed at the Deedene. But the politics Prince Filippo learnt at Cambridge were more revolutionary. But though the new doctrine of socialism he picked up as an undergraduate in England provoked a climax years later when a mob of Mussolini's Fascists stormed the Palazzo Doria, society in Rome and London assumed the jinx of the Hope diamond sent him down from Cambridge when a rowing accident resulted in tuberculosis of the spine that turned him into a permanent invalid. Filippo was not only captivated by the new politics at Cambridge but also by the lectures given by his cousin Adeline Lister-Kaye.

In her autobiography Adeline writes, 'Fluttering along in currents of new thought and theories and ideas eventually I discarded the OLD THINGS that fettered us to the PAST and embraced what we defined as "Futurism" in all its forms, decoration, furniture, painting, poetry. In his student days, he (Filippo) had professed socialist ideas, deeply disturbing to his father. I had the impression that his many possessions, estates and art treasures were an intolerable burden to him and if he could devise some way of disposing of

palazzo, castles, villas, land and property he would do so gladly.'

When Filippo returned to Rome from Cambridge he took Adeline along as she was in the throes of translating Grazia Deledda's novel **Elias Portolu** into English. Soon Roman society was gossiping about the young prince and his lecturing cousin as 'Filippo and Filippa'. Adeline wrote, 'At the end of the winter season in Rome my aunt abruptly shortened my visit and gave as her reason that relations between Filippo and I were going too far. There could be no question of marriage between us, as we were first cousins, and I was sent back to England.'

In her biography of Luchino Visconti, the famous Italian film director, Gaia Servadio consulted Manolo Borromeo, Filippo's nephew, about his boyhood friendship with Visconti. Manolo recalled, 'My mother, like Luchino's, gave large parties. At Palazzo Borromeo, as in all the most important Milanese households, there was open house once a week. As a child, from my mother's room - the door ajar - I could spy on the adults, and I remember D'Annunzio, at my mother's feet, holding a bunch of violets.'

In the years prior to Manolo Borromeo's parents' marriage, D'Annunzio was sitting at the feet of the American Gladys Deacon and offering her flowers at another of the Doria Family homes. In her book, **The Face of the Sphinx**, Daphne Fielding writes, 'Before long Florence Baldwin became Prince Doria's mistress and was installed by him in the most beautiful of all Italian Renaissance villas, Caprarola, designed in 1754 for the Farnese family. As the hostess of Caprarola she began to be invited to fashionable entertainments. The Romans professed to be scandalised that her daughters should be allowed to live in the house in which her *inamorato* had installed her.'

Someone who was in Rome at this time and witnessed events was Tina Whitaker who went to a reception at the Palazzo Doria for the engagement of Orietta Doria, the seventeen-year-old daughter of 'The Magnificent Alfonso' by his English wife Emily. Tina Whitaker wrote, 'Mrs Baldwin from Boston was there; a hard determined face - handsome still. Prince Doria making no secret of his devotion. Her daughter the famous Gladys Deacon is handsome.' Princess Emily Doria and her English family did not mind 'The Magnificent Alfonso' going to Mrs Baldwin's bed at the Villa Caprarola, but they wanted to stop the daughter, Gladys Deacon, from marrying Lord Francis Hope, so becoming the next Duchess of Newcastle.

Lord Francis had already lost a leg in a shooting accident, as well as his Hope fortune. He had previously married the actress May Yohé, of Red Indian stock, who used to draw New York audiences by wearing the blue Hope diamond on stage. But not enough people turned up to pay the couple's debts, so the diamond was sold to the Sultan of Turkey and there the jinx is

said to have brought the throne down. Gladys Deacon in the end married the Duke of Marlborough and at Blenheim Palace she was soon upsetting the Churchill family by telling how 'rather poky' it appeared after all the splendour of the Villa Caprarola.

The poet and novelist, Gabrielle D'Annunzio, became the father of Fascism and did not approve of Adeline and her cousin going around as 'Filippo and Filippa' giving lectures about modern art and modern sanitation for the workers' cottages on the vast Doria estates. But in looks and intelligence Adeline could compete with Gladys Deacon, and D'Annunzio set out to woo her from the dangerous 'Filippo and Filippa' partnership which both English and Italian sides of the family found so offensive.

Adeline was perfectly aware that D'Annunzio's attitude to her was tinged with jealousy, not simply because her cousin Filippo Doria wished to marry her, but in her literary tastes. Of the numerous authors who went to drink champagne before dinner at the Palazzo Doria the only one Adeline wished to translate into English was Grazia Deledda who had written a Sicilian drama, *Elias Portolu*. Adeline very much admired Grazia Deledda not simply for being a clever author but also as a completely self-liberated woman who had already published her first novel at the age of seventeen. Grazia's views on women corresponded closely with Adeline's. But it was over thirty years later that Adeline's lectures in Rome about Futurism became a tragedy for Filippo Doria.

Elias Portolu was due for publication just before the next general election and as Adeline's father was standing in the Tory cause he asked to see the page-proofs. He found the novel 'indecent' and ordered its withdrawal or Adeline would lose her allowance. His daughter wrote, 'Not one thought to all I had put into it, the study, work, the pleasure of accomplishment, the prospect of earning a little money by my own efforts. This business of "hurt feelings" was the bane of our family relationships. His were so sensitive. No one had feelings except him.'

Years later Adeline felt that justice, for long postponed, was at last done and seen in the glare of publicity to be done. The international press did not allude to 'indecent' literature as Cecil Lister-Kaye saw when he read in *The Times* that his daughter's friend, the 'foreigner' Grazia Deledda won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1926. Cecil Lister-Kaye took great pride in being the Duke of Newcastle's brother-in-law and was all out to beat the Welsh upstart Lloyd George over the sale of honours that financed the Liberal Party. He did not like his daughter Adeline to remind him that when an earlier Duke of Newcastle was Prime Minister in 1755 the system of political patronage became so utterly corrupt that when sending a letter to Newcastle a member of parliament marked the envelope 'Private and Pecuniary.'

Adeline wrote, 'Having penetrated far enough into the Italian peninsula and peninsula I was drawn to the next terra-incognita, Russia. I set myself the task of learning Russian with the ultimate idea of translating some Russian authors. Among the Russians who used to winter with my aunt in Rome was a friend Vera Demidoff and she invited me to her home after Easter. Korsoun was a large estate consisting of farms, forests, steppes owned by Prince Lapoukhin Demidoff. The house, a two-storied building of Russian style architecture and the gardens were situated in the bend of a river. Over a bridge on one side began the forest, and on the other was the village. The family consisted of the old Prince and Princess, two unmarried daughters, one my friend Vera, and three small grandsons, children of the son who lived with his wife in Petersburg. The language in general conversation was French or Russian. I have spoken French with a Russian accent ever since.'

'The family owned no car but several had their own equipage and pair of horses, so Vera's dvoika driven by a burly, bearded Yuri took us for long drives in the country, across wide plains, in summer a sea of golden grain rippling with a light breeze, over roads that were no more than rough tracks, the landscape bounded by a thin black line of forest on the far horizon. The stout Russian horses were able to go great distances, and once we drove seventy verts and spent two nights with old Count Leon Bobrinski at Smela. We spent two weeks in Petersburg and there were guests for several days of Countess Betsy Shouvaloff in her beautiful house on the Fantanka.' It was through Betsy Shouvaloff that Adeline made her first contact with Russian theatre and ballet.

Vera Vassilova followed her father and grandfather into theatre fame while it was her daughter Katusha who danced her way into the Imperial Ballet School and to the top of the Bolshoi Theatre. Katusha took the professional name Catherine Devilliers and she and her friend Princess Dil de Rohan would later play roles in Adeline's life as well as mine.

The Demidoff estate at Korsoun lay in the Ukraine and Adeline wrote, 'The policy of Russification of the Ukraine was deeply resented by the Ukrainians who regarded themselves as a distinctive national group with their own "Hetman" and their own language. In 1905 the young Ukrainian industrial proletariat joined in the abortive revolutionary out-break and were mercilessly suppressed. No part of Russia has had more troubled history than the Ukraine.'

Vera Demidoff took her English guest to stay with the Skoropadsky family which since 1708 had ruled as the 'Hetman'. The Skoropadskys had two small sons Petro and Danylo who were the same age as Vera's nephews living at Korsoun and Adeline became very attached to them, especially to Petro. When he was five years old Petro had seen some of the village boys

throwing stones at a blackbird trapped in river-mud. He went to the bird's rescue and the boys turned and stoned him, injuring Petro so badly that he could never afterwards lead a normal life and never become the next 'Hetman' of the Ukraine.

The Ukrainian girl who most impressed Adeline with her good looks and manner was Moura Zakrevskaya who by Adeline's last visit to Russia had become the Countess Benckendorff. Anthony Blunt and I knew Moura best as the Baroness Budberg, who had been a double agent long before she left Russia to live with H G Wells in England. Although her old lover and fellow prisoner in the Kremlin, Bruce Lockhart, has given a good account of Moura's extraordinary story in *Memoirs of a British Agent*, it is a very incomplete tale. She had only been released from detainment in Moscow on condition that she spied on Gorky, and she enjoyed the sex as much as the espionage during their years together.

Adeline continues, 'Bristling with new ideas, new horizons, I returned to England. In my trunks was the whole of Anton Chekov's works in Russian. I had learnt with joy that he was as yet unknown in England. In great excitement I settled down to the delightful task of translating *The Steppe* and some of his other work. *The Steppe* recounts the long drive across the steppe of a small boy, Egorouchka, heading for an unknown destination where he is to go to school. He is accompanied by two men, one of them his uncle. The forlorn little captive watches the thistledown borne on a light breeze, floating over the grasses, rising, falling, seeming to dart about freely as a bird or butterfly, the way inanimate things sometimes do. The story appealed to me. I too, driving over the wide plains with the two little Skoropadsky boys had felt strangely moved at the sight of a boundless sea of golden grain rippling as a light breeze blew hither and thither. Young Danylo always asking the Yuri driver to stop the dvoika so that he could get a moth or butterfly for his poor brother Petro.'

War broke out just when Adeline's translation was finished and Mr Heinemann, the publisher gave her a contract for *The Steppe* in 1914. One day as Adeline was shopping in London two people waved at her from a large car. One was Bendor, the lecherous Duke of Westminster, which did not please her, but the other was a Russian, which delighted her. She had first met Boris Anrep in Countess Betsy Shouvaloff's home in Petersburg, where as a young law student in that city he had been taken up by Anna Akhatova the poetess. In London Evan Tredegar and his drinking companion, Augustus John, took on responsibility for Boris Anrep's circulation in the art world because Boris was a painter too with special interest in Byzantine and Renaissance art. He soon became a member of the Bloomsbury group and with Samuel Courtauld's backing he was commissioned to do the two fine

mosaic pavements at the entrance of the National Gallery.

John Mortimer wrote of Wyn Henderson that she claimed to have been 'the mistress of many notable people, millionaires, surrealist painters, actors and musicians.' Certainly her claims over Boris Anrep's striking body were never disputed. But one of the longest affairs, Havelock Ellis, called Wyn 'dangerous' and she certainly was no friend of Evan Tredegar one of the millionaires she failed to seduce, not without trying. This was a great blow to Wyn's vanity since she, like her former business-partner, Nancy Cunard, had many affairs with homosexual men. Wyn had her revenge when Boris Anrep and Augustus John lured the young poet Dylan Thomas away from having 'sherry and princesses' too frequently with Evan Tredegar. Dylan's letters to Wyn have been published, and this of the 9 March 1936, is typical of their manner of talking, 'Darling (Dylan) Darling (Dylan again) Wyn...Wyn privately: As your mascot and very welcome guest, I'd love to come to Cornwall more than anything else...I can write poems, and stories about vampire sextons deflowering their daughters with very tiny scythes, and draw rude little pictures of three-balled clergymen...'

Wyn was extremely jealous of Adeline who for long remained the 'mascot' of the highly desirable Boris Anrep. During the First World War Adeline saw much of Boris as she writes, 'Next in futility was the Russian Munitions Supply Commission which Boris Anrep asked me to join. We engaged in the purchase and despatch to Russia of types of ammunition that did not fit any of the rifles or guns used in the Russian Army. When the Provisional Government in Russia which took over after the Revolution announced their intention of discontinuing the war and signed a separate treaty with Germany, the Commission was wound up. In the early days of the abdication of Czar Nicholas, Boris made a flying visit to Russia and returned thither jubilant about the Revolution. I was not among those who hailed it with enthusiasm. I was anxious for my friends. I wrote to Vera Demidoff and asked her, "What do you think of the Revolution?" In the last letter I ever received from her she wrote, "In a revolution one does not think. Like a storm it is all noise and confusion and nothing makes any sense..."

The downfall of the Russian empire and murder of the Tsar seemed to the Ukrainian people the opportune moment to demand recognition of their autonomy. The Bolsheviks accepted this in principle, but when they failed to honour their word the Ukrainian government at Kiev appealed to Germany and Austria for help and their troops soon arrived to proclaim Prince Paul Skoropadsky the 'Hetman' of the Ukraine, and his second son, Danylo, the 'Hetmanych'. Because of this foreign interference there was a violent upheaval among the peasants and the German General Eichorn was assassinated while Hetman Skoropadsky and his family escaped to Berlin where in due

course they became powerful bargaining pawns with Adolf Hitler.

Adeline was now the only one of the three Lister-Kaye sisters unmarried and her parents hoped she would not marry but stay at home and help her mother run the village and High Church activities while having the run of the large library for her writing. But Adeline saw marriage as the best means of escaping finally from 'the damn Family Place.' She was almost forty years old but thought there was more to life than obediently following her mother to the village church armed with stout walking sticks in case they encountered the Protestant Truth Society damaging the High Church objects once again. In her autobiography Adeline writes, 'One morning Elmo de la Feld whom I met almost daily when in London when he helped edit my translations, walked into the sitting-room of my Uncle Newcastle's, with a beaming, happy smile on his countenance and putting his arms round me exclaimed "Amore mio! I can call you mine. My poor wife has died." There in perfect confidence, exuberantly happy stood before me the faithful, devoted Elmo. And in fact, the next moment the only question that arose was the announcement of our engagement.'

Adeline's father employed his familiar tactics of snobbery to stop this marriage to 'a vile foreigner,' conveniently forgetting he had procured his teenage wife and her Hope fortune at a 'clandestine ceremony' in a remote Ulster castle with a crippled schoolboy to give his sister away in marriage. If Lady Randolph Churchill had found Cecil Lister-Kaye 'a sick tiresome youth' at the time of his engagement to the young Lady Beatrice, the daughter of that unfortunate marriage, Adeline, found her father's search of Count de la Feld's ancestors and for the all-important Family Place even more tiresome. But such things were taken very seriously as Lady Churchill demonstrated in another book where she described a big fancy dress ball at Devonshire House attended by the same old Prince of Wales set and at which 'Many people copied the portraits of their ancestors, notably Sir John Kaye, who in chain mail represented his forbear Sir Kaye of the *Morte d'Arthur*.'

Cecil Lister-Kaye's vicious attack on Elmo de la Feld came to an hysterical climax as Adeline describes, 'The male parent made a remark about his brother John - whose reputations in financial matters would bear no scrutiny and had been on trial for complicity in a swindle - in a tone almost of admiration, "I must say Johnny is what the Americans call very smart." Caustically I remarked, "It seems to me the term smart means that you have swindled the other person before he has had time to swindle you." Never do I remember the parent turn paler or more livid with rage as he snapped back at me, "We want none of your opinions here." Putting into plain words what had always been the unwritten, unspoken rule, in the Family Place. No opinion to be expressed other than those conforming with his own. My

mental response, "And you never shall..".'

That was the end. More determined than ever to marry Elmo de la Feld from the Italian Embassy, Adeline received support from a source still reckoned as a force in family affairs. Her Uncle Newcastle decided the private chapel at Clumber should be the setting for the wedding, for Adeline had been a bridesmaid at his own wedding to Kathleen Candy in 1889. So, at last Adeline would be married, and not at her own home, but in the place she had first escaped to over twenty years before when fleeing the miseries of the Family Place. Without children of their own for whose births, comings-out and weddings the full ducal honours of Clumber could be displayed, the uncle and aunt put it all at Adeline's disposal for the great day. It would, if nothing else, paper over the cracks in the family relationships. So out came the gold and silver for the altar and the wedding breakfast, and on went the footmen's best livery and powdered wigs along with the court dress donned for the occasion by the large diplomatic party brought by the Italian Ambassador who acted as his friend Elmo's best man. Adeline's own niece, Lady Bridget Parsons, was one of the bridesmaids.

Flowers from Clumber's greenhouses and gardens splashed the chapel's Gothic architecture with unaccustomed colour and hundreds of candles enriched them by flames vying with a sun luridly filtered through the chapel's east and south windows. Robed in scarlet and white, the choir-boys of the duke's private music school filed down the aisle singing music specially composed for the wedding. How different it all was from the 'clandestine ceremony' at Castle Blayney the same duke had given as a teenage schoolboy for his sister Beatrice exactly forty years before.

In 1959 Adeline left England for the last time to settle in Victoria on Vancouver Island where she had joined me in 1950 when I was teaching at Shawnigan Lake School. I went to see her off by boat at Liverpool dock and pressed her to keep the promise about writing the story of her life which she had made to her niece Bridget Parsons and to our mutual friend George Balcombe. Bridget had been hurt by her family's psychotic secrecy so that much of what she knew of the family's story came from others' books.

Adeline wrote in her autobiography, 'The atmosphere of secrecy they had engendered concealed me from them, no less effectually than their secrets hid themselves from me. With their secrets and aloofness they were worse than strangers, because it was owing to them that I was in my present predicament. I accepted the image they presented of themselves but the term "love" had a hard and hollow sound.'

Adeline called her book *My Zapiski* because the Russian word suggests the author wants to convey the impressions made by certain experiences in her life or, as she called them, impressions *vécues*. She wrote,

'No difficulty arises in tracing the origins of my impressions vécues. The persistent and recurrent Sacrifice and Victim motif, accompanied by minor derivative motifs, such as Joylessness. Victims rarely appear joyful. Acceptance of the Christian way is pursued with grim determination with the natural consequence of mistaking solemnity for seriousness, and laughter as frivolity, which, of course, it often is.'

Boris Anrep's arrival on the London art scene with the other Russian artists, Larionov and Goncharova excited the impressionable Adeline and gave her new experiences in the Edwardian capital. When their war work ended Anrep stayed on in London as the Military Secretary to the Russian Government Commission in the 1920s so Adeline continued to see the arresting-looking Anrep who sported a no-less arresting uniform. Boris was not afraid to pull Lytton Strachey's beard or come to blows with Augustus John. Adeline's translations from Russian into English and French fascinated the artists since her interests ranged from the lyrics of Sologub to Shestov, **The Philosopher of Tragedy**, the title of her essay on Shestov which appeared in the **Fortnightly**.

In **My Zapiski**, Adeline recalled, 'Meanwhile my love affairs were adding their share to my unhappiness. There came a moment in time when a married man - the first but not the last - fell seriously in love with me, pursued and pressed his passion until we faced the inevitable question; if he tried to obtain a divorce from his wife, or failing her co-operation, which was likely, would I consent to "elope" with him, and together we would start a new life in Canada or Rhodesia, anywhere I wished? The idea of an elopement sounded romantic and adventurous. But, still shackled by notions of the nobility of self-sacrifice, I persuaded myself that I must refuse this happy prospect for myself, rather than bring unhappiness on my family, on his, notably his young children, who would be deprived of a father. I must confess I did not mind about his wife. Moreover, there was the matter of his political career said to be promising. To this day I am unable to say whether I was right or wrong. I am inclined to think the latter. Did I not wreck his happiness as well as my own? Were we not both of us striving to get free, to move away out from our social taboos, restrictions, conventions of a bourgeois class servitude, to go and lead a life where we would come up against reality and leave behind the miasma of the social whirligig and pretences?'

'The chauve-souris prefers the shadows and shuns the sunlight. Into the shadows it went. We retired into the shadows with our love, secret correspondence, secret meetings, dinners in strict privacy at the Cafe Royal. Such a pleasant irony. That very thing I did not want, was forced on me. Not an open love affair, but a secret one. I, in arms against all this secrecy, leading a double life. Then came another married man, Elmo de la Feld. We first met

figure-skating on the lovely Suvretta House icerink at S.Moritz where I had accompanied by my married sister. Elderly, alone, his wife in a manicomio in Italy, he devoted himself to me. Then his wife died and Elmo proposed. Of the two or three wives whose death would not have greatly distressed me this one I wanted least. To the mocking, unseen foe persecuting and piercing me with such cruelty I answered "All right, enough of this bloody SELF-sacrifice, I'll sacrifice others."

Adeline's reaction to all the ducal trappings surrounding her wedding at Clumber were recorded, 'I stood there with despair in my heart. He stood beside me giving his answers so firmly, fervently, warmly. Mine came limp and flat, complying with a formula to which I was bound to conform but the meaning of which remained on the surface, below lay mental reservations. Inwardly a raging pain that I was being false, playing a detestable part, filled with misery that this moment in my life which might have been a happy one was, in fact, only one of grim satisfaction that it provided me with a sort of escape. Henceforth I would have another name, I would have somewhere of my own to live, a small flat in London that would be my own.'

Complete independence from 'the damn Family Place' in Yorkshire, expressed in the form of a London flat, preoccupied the bride's mind, and was to be regretted, for Adeline later wrote, 'Elmo wanted us to go and live in Italy where we could have lived more comfortably on a devalued lira than in England. The idea of going to live in Italy sounded too much like exile as I could not bear the thought of all severance between myself and my Parsons nephews and niece. Going abroad for short trips was one thing, but to settle there seemed like going into a desert.'

Adeline's brother-in-law was killed in the Great War, so his twelve-year-old son Michael became the Earl of Rosse. When their mother remarried, Adeline became more than a favourite aunt. She took the Parsons children on tours of the Italian towns which Lord Rosse later said awakened his love of art and architecture, a love which flowered when he became a founder of the Georgian Group. But the Parsons children derived other educational value from these trips with their 'Aunt Ad' in the 1920s and 30s for they gained first hand experience of the rising power of Fascism started by the poet Gabriele D'Annunzio. They would meet many Russians, both Red and White.

Gaia Servadio writes, 'in that spring of 1925, Diaghilev and Serge Lifar, his new protege, had been to stay at Villa d'Este, and called on both Donna Carla and Countess Demidoff, one of the many Russian aristocrats who had fled the revolution.' If Adeline's friend Vera had been killed, her sister-in-law and family looked for help from their old friend Countess Orietta Borromeo, the sister of Filippo Doria. Amongst the other Russian aristocrats who sought out Adeline was the beautiful Moura Zakrevskaya-

Benckendorff, now styled Baroness Budberg although living with Maxim Gorky as his secretary and mistress at the Villa Sorrito in Sorrento. As in Russia before and later in London, Moura surrounded herself with authors, and recommended to Adeline the work of writers who had experienced, like herself, the full horror of the Revolution. Some of these Adeline introduced to readers of the **Fortnightly Review**.

Seven years after their marriage Elmo de la Feld died and Adeline resumed her old role of helping her Aunt Florence run the Deptford Institute in the East End, and acting as hostess to her Uncle Newcastle at Forest Farm in Windsor Forest. Oscar Wilde's 'My Duchess' preferred to stay at Clumber looking after her horses and dogs. The duke was more than happy to have his wife tending her fillies in the Midlands while he pursued his own interests at Eton and Radley in the south. And Adeline often found the duke's demands at Forest Farm interfering with her own interests. Simply because some prince or arch-duke was being taken from Windsor Castle to lunch at Forest Farm, Adeline would have to cancel her English classes for Ukrainian refugees and race down to act as hostess.

Yet in spite of such interruptions, Adeline had in some ways become quite fond of the deformed duke. One day she came upon her uncle and his Radley friend, Ernest Bryans, admiring the sea of daffodils spread out before them. As she was about to drive back to her flat in George Street, she asked if she could pick a bunch of daffodils to cheer her place up. 'But see that you leave some for me,' replied the duke. Adeline had just completed a whole month of tedious luncheon and dinner parties, and looking now at the tens of thousands of daffodils she lost her temper. She had only picked a few flowers and throwing them at the duke's feet she stormed off with, 'Bugger the pair of you.' His grace did not forget it and promptly disinherited her. 'Damn' would have got by, but not 'bugger.' It was too close to home and to Oscar Wilde as well as to Uncle Arthur and his 'Stella' and 'Fanny.'

Adeline was relieved at the prospect of no more tea-parties for promising Etonians hoping to win the Newcastle Prize to Cambridge, no more filling of Ernest Bryans's whisky glass after his trembling hand had spilt the last, no more being forced to make a hand at bridge. Adeline wrote, 'A sense of liberation gave buoyancy to my step. I am free to wander whither I will. Freedom is what I wanted. The freedom to be myself, the kind of person I inwardly feel I can be if I can break the bonds that constrict, hamper, obstruct me, and get rid of the false precepts that influence my behaviour. That I remained so enmeshed, ensnared, encrusted in the social snobisme of my milieu, did not come to my senses and realise that "La justice il faut se la faire soi-meme... si on est trop bon est vole".'

With the strength of her new convictions, Adeline returned to settle old

scores. After she had married Elmo de la Feld, her cousin, Filippo Doria, made one of his nurses his princess. The thousand rooms of the Palazzo Doria rang with the cheerful Scottish voice of the latest Princess Doria who loved to bake Scotch scones and pastry, to the amusement of her critics who remembered the socialist lectures of 'Filippo and Filippa' and saw now the results in Prince Filippo's marriage to a servant who loved to cook.

Few authors have written about so many of Adeline's family as James Lees-Milne who was at school with her Parsons nephews. In 1945 he went to Rome to see the Palazzo Doria where Prince Filippo greeted Lees-Milne. He is so exceedingly polite and smiling that I deduce he shuns intimacies. He is rather bent from the waist like an old apple tree. He has tuberculosis of the spine, poor man, and was tortured by Mussolini.'

The Pope in Lees-Milne's day was a great lover of princes and Pius XII liked to be carried high in his papal palanquin by the Swiss Guards among the adoring faithful. The idea of a Scottish nurse baking a batch of scones to entertain such a snob as Pius XII gave critics of the Dorias more ammunition. Long before Benito Mussolini and his storm-troopers turned their rage on the crippled Filippo Doria and his homely princess, Il Duce knew how Adeline's early lectures on Futurism had become bitter attacks against him in the press of the 1930s. Adeline had offended D'Annunzio by refusing to interest herself in his historical novels, and he knew she was not above manhandling a poet kneeling before her with violets at the Palazzo Doria just as if he were one of the Protestant Truth Society's plunderers at the family's High Churches.

Gabriele D'Annunzio was born in 1863 and already in his sixteenth year wrote and published poems which critics hailed as works of genius. In the years before the Great War when Adeline knew him best in Rome, poetry, prose and plays poured from him together with a true patriot's scalding attacks on those he thought put Italy at risk. Early in the Great War he toured Italy rousing people to impending danger, and was influential in getting Italy to join the Allies against Germany. He then fought, first in the infantry, then in the cavalry, next in the navy and finally in the air force. More swashbuckling followed when, placing himself at the head of a volunteer army, he occupied the Italian seaport of Fiume, which the Armistice terms denied to Italy. D'Annunzio declared Fiume a new state and governed it as a ruler for fifteen months until an embarrassed Italian government drove him out. But to the Italian people D'Annunzio was a hero and the King of Italy made him Prince of Monte Nevoso in 1924.

When Mussolini and his Black Shirts had marched on Rome two years previously with D'Annunzio's blessing, the King had undemocratically asked Mussolini to form a government that would put an end to the workers' unrest and factory sit-ins. Down came the red flags and Marxist slogans and up went

the Fascist banners. In such books as **Francesca da Rimini** D'Annunzio in 1902 skilfully recreated the atmosphere of the Middle Ages, but now Mussolini went further and made a revival of ancient Rome with Italianism transformed as his Fascist philosophy and crude, gigantic statutes erected as the visual symbols of power.

Mussolini's Italy was no place for Maxim Gorky and he returned home to Russia while Moura Budberg came to London to resume her affair with H G Wells. Anthony West writes, 'She (Moura) had to be a Russian agent in good standing. As soon as he (H G Wells) came within sight of this conclusion my father was compelled to consider its implications. The most obvious of them had to be that she had been planted on him just as she had been planted on Gorky. She would almost certainly have been under the orders of her controller when she came to seek him out in England after Gorky had decided to go home. Her employers would have wanted to outfit her with some plausible motive for moving from Sorrento to London. It came to him with a sickening thrust that the piece of candour with which she had won Gorky's absolute confidence could have been nothing more than an astutely concocted double bluff in which she had been coached.'

Just as Evan Tredegar and Harold Nicolson in 1932 got the cream of cafe society to attend the launching party of Nina Hamnett's **Laughing Torso**, the same gay pair ensured that such literary snobs as Lady Lavery, Enid Bagnold and Lady Cunard joined the company that assembled to dine at the Quo Vadis restaurant in Soho and launch Wells and Moura on society in 1935. One person not invited was Adeline de la Feld who enjoyed meeting Moura and other old friends from Russia at the ballet.

As an early advocate of modern art Adeline was invited to an exhibition of avant-garde paintings by a German emigré called Bruno Hat. Evelyn Waugh wrote the catalogue and Lytton Strachey bought one of the paintings. The exhibition turned out to be a hoax by the Bright Young People, as this smart set was now called. Brian Howard had impersonated the non-existent emigre genius 'Bruno Hat.' Two others of the Bright Young People would later become well-known spokesmen for the High Church cause long espoused by Adeline's family, Tom Driberg and John Betjeman.

Unlike Ernest Bryans and John Betjeman after him, who had gone to Marlborough before going up to Oxford, Tom Driberg was a pupil at Lancing College where he so much admired Adam Fox's hymn to a pagan god. He wrote his own memorial in the unusually monothematic but frank autobiography **Ruling Passions** in which he detailed his homosexual conquests, including his seduction of and by men when he was a schoolboy at Lancing. Conspicuously absent from the story, however, is the fact that in order to become a politician, and later chairman of the Labour Party, he

emulated his arch-enemy, and short-time lover, Evan Tredegar, by acquiring a wife as a facade. Although Mrs Driberg merited no mention in the book, Adam Fox did, along with Tom's appointment to the quaint office of Select Preacher to the university which entailed the equally quaint attendance of a uniformed beadle to conduct him through the streets of Oxford.

The spy-catchers dutifully went to Driberg's old college, Christ Church, at Oxford and although they unearthed Tom's correspondence with such weird characters as Aleister Crowley and Gerald Hamilton, they found nothing about the dead Dickie Mountbatten nor about the living Prince Philip, both of whom are portrayed in **Ruling Passions**. Driberg knew what Aleister Crowley did in Ovingdean church but his friend, Peter Anson had much earlier, in 1964, published in **Bishops At Large**, descriptions of the homosexual clergy in those High Churches so closely associated with the Duke of Newcastle's family. Dickie Mountbatten is dead, but not the then-young Gray's Inn Road policeman who interviewed me and others also still alive about Tom's self-confessed activities in Bloomsbury's public lavatories, over one of which Dil de Rohan had such a vantage view.

Such eccentricities pass for normality at Oxford and Cambridge with the proud double-agent Tom Driberg walking through the streets of Oxford behind a uniformed beadle as Select Preacher and another spy, Sir Anthony Blunt showing heads of state around royal residences as Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures. Another Lancing boy and close friend of Driberg's who went up to Oxford at the same time was Evelyn Waugh, and although he too remained within Adeline's sphere long after coming down, his comments on her family in his published diaries were hardly flattering.

Waugh went to a party given by Audrey Lucas and towards the end when most were drunk a party of gatecrashers arrived headed by the Earl of Rosse and Brian Howard. Waugh recorded, 'I was furious with them. Rosse said to me, "What is this hall I am in?" I told him it was hired for the occasion. "What an extraordinary arrangement; and who are all these people - actresses I suppose or what?" I told him that they were my friends, "Indeed, and are any of them anyone one has ever heard of?" I think his manners are not good.'

In the end Adeline had to agree with Waugh, and she not only regretted his spending of the family fortune on entertaining large house-parties for the royal family, like his great-uncle, the Duke of Newcastle before him, but Adeline disinherited Michael Rosse, although when she died he was her closest relation. She did not like the way he followed Adeline's father by destroying family papers and his manner of treating his dying sister Bridget. Adeline called Brian Howard 'the rotten one' and Harold Acton termed him 'poor Brian Howard' while Evelyn Waugh said Howard was 'mad, bad and dangerous to know' and drew from both Acton and Howard for the character

of Anthony Blanche in **Brideshead Revisited**. Adeline had read Havelock Ellis over the years because he held similar ideas to her's about women's position in society, although nothing would have induced her to go out with the great sex authority and as another woman had done, urinate in the rain with him in Oxford Street. It was another woman rather than Oxford Street in the rain that Adeline had to deal with, Wyn Henderson, her old rival for the love of Boris Anrep.

No one knew the situation at the Duke of Newcastle's Ulster estate or Lady Cunard's London drawing-room better than Sir Shane Leslie. He had been godfather to Evan Tredegar's wife at her Catholic baptism by Father C C Martindale. The new Lady Tredegar assured the Jesuit priest that she would probably be a 'bad Catholic, since she did everything badly in life.' Shane Leslie always held 'it was a tragedy that he (Evan) had not married Nancy Cunard, seeming so winsomely suited.' Had Nancy married Evan it would certainly not have led to a publication like **Black Man and White Ladyship** because Lady Cunard adored Evan.

Adeline immediately suspected that Brian Howard, her nephews' old school friend, had had a hand in this startling pamphlet which duly offended the people it was meant to offend, though it received the blessing of the young and culturally avant garde. **Black Man and White Ladyship** put Adeline in a difficult position since she knew perfectly well that Lady Cunard had indeed behaved vilely to Nancy and her friends, and, included in the people it was meant to offend, was her own family. In 1924 Sir John Lister-Kaye died, having secured his own position with Lady Cunard and her social backers of the Ballets Russes, while his wife survived until the Second World War as did her friend and fellow American, Lady Cunard.

Shane Leslie's daughter Anita, in her book **Edwardians in Love** gives a brilliant account of the Russian ballet and the part Sir John Lister-Kaye played in behind-the-scenes bed-hopping. She says that Sir John's unpublished letters are at a remote Irish castle, but in fact there to sort out the Lister-Kaye letters at Birr Castle was a senior member of the Northern Ireland Records Office. If the letters and court papers to do with Sir John's trial on fraud were destroyed, not so the war papers I brought in 1949 from his niece Adeline in Canada. But if Sir John's inside knowledge of the private lives of the Russian ballet are unpublished, the so-called gem of Sir John's inside gossip has been published and publicised in Tom Driberg's **Ruling Passions** where he records that Nijinsky's penis was so long that he could self-fellate, or what the Select Preacher to Oxford University termed 're-cycling.'

Adeline wrote of Sir John's death, 'Unregretably he left no progeny and the Family Place, the cause of so much unhappiness was demolished and lay buried in coal-dust.' Nancy Cunard did not hold a monopoly, however, of

causing outrage where outrage was due, although **Black Man and White Ladyship** certainly did that effectively among Lady Cunard's grand friends, who included three generations of Adeline's family. From among her mother's jewels Adeline chose the Anastasius Pearls since these symbolised the independence she had sought for so many years, because Thomas Hope bought the pearls with the proceeds of **Anastasius**, his best-selling novel which in turn had symbolised his own independence. Adeline lent the Anastasius Pearls and her other Hope jewels to her only niece Bridget Parsons who was now the centre of attention at Lady Cunard's house.

Today some of Thomas Hope's furniture graces the sumptuous apartments of the Prince Regent's Brighton Pavilion. Among the numerous descriptions of Thomas and Louisa Hope at famous balls in several countries one of the most stunning shows how they looked on Christmas Day 1823 at the Royal Pavilion. Lady Granville wrote of Louisa dressed 'in solid gold, with rare birds flying in different directions out of her head.' The Anastasius Pearls and other jewels worn by Louisa Hope in Brighton were now being worn by her great-great-granddaughter Bridget Parsons as Prince George and the Prince of Wales led the dancers at Lady Cunard's ballroom. Both families were well acquainted with each other.

When she was a girl and before the Newcastles moved to Forest Farm in Windsor Forest, Queen Mary had been taken to 'Clumber House, the chief seat of the Duke of Newcastle. There she made some slight acquaintance with one of the finest libraries in the kingdom, and admired as well the princely collection of paintings wherein Rubens, Hogarth, Gainsborough and Rembrandt were each well represented.'

This comes from the official biography of Queen Mary by Kathleen Woodward. She did not come out of the same drawer as Daphne Fielding and James Lees-Milne who have written at some length about Bridget Parsons and her family. Kathleen Woodward was born in poverty at Bermondsey and grew up in the East End that helped to make the wealth for Evan Tredegar and other slum landlords like him. Kathleen knew that Adeline was not just a poor relation in Forest Farm waiting for Queen Mary to arrive from Windsor Castle with some archduchess for Adeline to comfort in Russian. The Queen's biographer was well aware of Adeline's free lessons for Ukrainian refugees at the aunt's Deptford, a district Queen Mary had visited to open creches for poor babies. King George V and Queen Mary followed a very different life-style from the opulence of Lady Cunard and Sir Thomas Beecham in Grosvenor Square. King George was allowed to live in many stately homes but they had no central heating. The King declared, 'And you can have hot baths every day! I only get a hot bath once a week, now - and - well; you just can't lather soap in cold water, can you.'

Kathleen Woodward's East End background well-qualified her for informing readers about the strange 'case of Mary Am and Mary R.' Queen Mary never forgot the relative poverty of her girlhood and realised it largely resulted from her evangelical mother doing the same kind of work as the family friends Lady Florence Pelham-Clinton and her niece, Adeline de la Feld, did in Deptford. How often had Queen Mary gone incognito to Deptford and other slum districts? She was so influenced by Mary Macarthur, the Women's Trades Union Organiser, that the 'case of Mary Am and Mary R' became a joke in Buckingham Palace and in the Labour Party. After Mary R visited Mary Am's flat at Mecklenburgh Square, the socialist wrote, 'to-day I positively lectured the Queen on the inequality of the classes - the injustice of things... I fear I talked too much again.'

The royal family could hardly avoid embarrassment when women in the suffragette movement demanded the vote and led by the Pankhursts chained themselves to the railings of Buckingham Palace. Sylvia Pankhurst ran the Women's Social and Political Union and was a founder of the British Communist Party who went to Moscow for the Second Congress of the Comintern in 1920. She, like Baroness Budberg, remained closely associated with Adeline's writing. When Sylvia started *The Ethiopian News* she naturally turned to her old friend Adeline to translate, from the Italian, Borghese's *The Sawdust Caesar*. In all this, Bridget Parsons remained Adeline's closest female relative, and for many years, as a trustee of the Deptford Institute, concerned herself with East End affairs. Bridget learnt a lot from her 'Dearest Aunt Ad,' including the importance of having her own independent opinion, especially with regard to women's rights, and when to say no to men, even when the man was a royal duke proposing marriage.

From girlhood, Adeline had grown up to know Emerald Cunard as part of the 'smart set' surrounding her uncle and aunt, Sir John and Lady Lister-Kaye. But Adeline principally despised Emerald for being part of the smart pro-German set who got the Prince of Wales and Prince George mixed up with Hitler and his ambassador in London. It alarmed Adeline to learn that the little boy from the long drives across the Ukrainian steppes, Prince Danylo Skoropadsky was now being groomed by Hitler for the day when Danylo would lead the many Ukrainian refugees of the 1918 debacle, back to their homeland where he would be made the Hetman of the Ukraine.

Powerful Hetman societies existed throughout the world but notably in America and Canada. Adeline did not care for the Free Ukraine campaign in England since it was led by Maundy Gregory who not only sold titles on behalf of Lloyd George's government, but used the Hope family home, the Deepdene, as an hotel until blackmailers ruined his homosexual career in boys and titles. As well as selling dukedoms and knighthoods, Maundy

Gregory founded the Anglo-Ukrainian Council crusading for restoration of autonomy in the Ukraine which had been a Soviet republic ever since 1918 when Prince Paul Skoropadsky took his son Danylo and the rest of the family to exile in Berlin. All the people involved in the double-dealing seemed associated with the corrupt Maundy Gregory, and eventually Sir John Davidson, the Conservative Party Chairman, got the Russian secret service to help rid them of Maundy Gregory. However, Gerald Macmillan's biography of Gregory aptly links what Gregory was doing in the 1920s with what the Duke of Newcastle, as Prime Minister, had been doing in the 1750s.

The Doria family in Rome had finally got rid of Gladys Deacon when she married the Duke of Marlborough. She tried to outdo her fellow-American, Lady Cunard, as a renowned hostess in the 1930s. She too greatly admired Hitler and called her favourite cat after him. She spent the war years locked up like a hermit in the country with her cats and refused to black out her windows. Hitler meant more to her than her ex-husband's cousin, Winston Churchill, who she declared 'was the right man for the time because he was showy and that's what they wanted.' For years a Polish gardener called Andrei Kwiatkowsky lovingly tended Gladys. In his biography of the duchess, Hugo Vickers said, 'She used to say to him, "You were born a peasant and you'll die a peasant, but me - I'm a Duchess."'

Sir Francis Rose loved to boast at every party how his father had thrown a maid out of the window when he found her kissing the baby Francis. Then, of course, there was Evan Tredegar, epitome of the British grandee, telling how his friend Gerald Berners had written a caricature of the lesbian writer Radcliffe Hall, author of the sad and serious *Wells of Loneliness*. Lord Berners called his satire *The Girls of Radcliff Hall* and sent a copy of it to Queen Mary. The Queen read it but failed to see the lesbiantic aspect of the satire and told her visitors that the clever Lord Berners had painted such an admirable picture of the headmistress of a girls' boarding-school in Miss Cecilia and that Miss Antonia was an exquisite description of a modern debutante. When the Queen's innocent remarks were retailed elsewhere by Evan Tredegar, those to the manner born greeted it with squeals of delight. It was as good as touching Queen Mary's imperial bosom in a private lift, if one was rich enough to have a private lift to one's town house. Queen Mary's husband, George V, seemed to have avoided the limelight and been happy with one bath a week. No apocryphal anecdotes commensurate with those involving his queen enjoyed popular currency, except perhaps his dying words, 'Bugger Bognor.'

In her autobiography, Daphne Fielding says that 'Brian Howard had a tremendous influence on all those who came in contact with him, including myself. A sinister impresario, epigrams crackling from his lips and dark eye-

brows raised, he looked mockingly down his nose at his proteges dancing like puppets as he pulled the strings... The Charleston and the Black Bottom had just been introduced into England. Brian decided that we should all become proficient in the steps of these dances... Michael Rosse became an expert and he and his sister, Bridget Parsons, caused surprise and envy in London ballrooms as together they danced a furious Charleston, both with a look of earnest concentration.'

On 5 May 1943 James Lees-Milne noted in his diary, 'Lunched at Sibyl Colefax's canteen with Nancy (Mitford) and Bridget (Parsons). Bridget rather catty about her nearest and dearest. Nancy whispered that she believed Peter Derwent had proposed to Bridget and had been rejected. Instead of being flattered Bridget seems to be affronted by each proposal of marriage she receives. Strange.' Bridget's nearest and dearest had for long been her dancing partner, brother Michael Rosse. But in 1935 he had married a divorcee Mrs Anne Armstrong-Jones. And in 1934 Prince George married the popular Princess Marina of Greece. Bridget remained single all her life and grew increasingly catty about it all her life.

Keeping Brian Howard and other of Bridget's friends away from Adeline's West End flat had created problems, since these pleasure-hunters did the cocktail hour in the West End by day, and at night went in search of sailors in the East End docks. Adeline had to ask the Deptford solicitors to write to Francis Rose forbidding him and his stoker friend John entry to the Deptford Institute. Rose was so passionately in love with the out-of-work stoker that he took a week's lodging at the Seamen's Mission, and made drawings of the poverty-stricken slums for an article in *Vogue*.

Then John got re-engaged with his old ship bound for the West Indies while Rose changed from his East End boiler-suit to rejoin Gertrude Stein and Princess de Rohan in Paris as the appropriately attired Fourth Baronet. But the sailor could not face separation from Rose and rushed back to the Seamen's Mission with the good news that he had secured Sir Francis the job of steward on the West Indian-bound boat. This did not suit Rose's new plans at all. The inevitable row erupted and the stoker jumped out of a window, breaking his back and dying soon after in his lover's arms. Cecil Beaton wrote, 'Francis had told the whole story to a kind Irish priest who said he must leave. So, leaving money for the funeral, ends the story of Francis's week in the East End.'

Francis Rose, however, soon turned up in London again with Bridget Parsons because Cecil Beaton intended writing his spoof royal memoirs, *My Royal Past*. He photographed a number of titled socialites for this including Bridget who wore mock jewels since her 'Dearest Aunt Ad' greatly disapproved of Cecil Beaton and certainly would not have allowed Bridget to wear the Anastasius Pearls. Queen Mary disliked the 1939 edition of *My Royal Past*,

but Adeline agreed with Marghanita Laski, reviewing the 1960 re-issue, 'It would be nice to be able to recommend *My Royal Past* for a good clean laugh. But it isn't quite clean and I didn't laugh.' However, Marghanita did have a laugh in that same year when I showed her how I had not been allowed to include 'Hark the herald angels sing, Mrs Simpson pinched our King' in *No Surrender*, whereupon she inserted it in a book of her own.

Adeline thought too many of those clustering around Cecil Beaton had too much money and too few proper activities to spend it and their time on. She hated the way they mocked what other people took seriously, and while she did not morally censure the camp young men who dressed-up in drag as princesses for Beaton's book, she strongly objected to Evan Tredegar and friends who, when bored with dancing the Black Bottom at Lady Cundard's ballroom, invaded High Churches for black mass and other sexual rites.

As shown by Brian Howard's letter to his mother, he knew what havoc *Black Man and White Ladyship* would wreak among Lady Cunard's smart set of which Bridget Parsons and Prince George remained the favourites even after they failed to marry each other. Adeline's mother, Lady Beatrice Lister-Kaye on becoming a widow, went to live with Adeline in George Street off the Edgware Road, and to see something of her Parsons grandchildren who were continually in and out of the flat. London offered the additional attractions of its many ritually elaborate churches, such as All Saints, Margaret Street which Lady Beatrice's great-uncle Alexander Beresford-Hope had built at his own expense.

At the George Street flat a Mrs Pringle presided as housekeeper with strict instructions never to let Brian Howard in again. This followed his gift to Lady Beatrice of a book that had just been published called *Bad Companions* about the old lady's Uncle Arthur and the relationship with 'Stella' and 'Fanny'. Adeline wrote about her mother, 'The lack of communication between her and her children was abysmal. Her fault in a way, because of the "secrets" which were a stupid offence to me. I write with the object of unmasking the secrets and putting the truth on record. Mine was a quest for truth.' Adeline simply viewed William Roughhead's *Bad Companions* as a statement of certain facts about certain people in the family, any emotion or the working up of 'hurt feelings' being entirely superfluous.

However, when her mother read *Bad Companions* Lady Beatrice's predictable reaction was exactly one of emotion and hurt feelings, and she suffered even more on realising that Adeline shared neither her shock nor her shame but on the contrary thought it an excellent thing at last, after so many years of 'secrets' and 'half-truths' to have the whole scandal brought into light. *Bad Companions* roused no feelings in Adeline other than those of approbation for Lord Chief Justice Cockburn's dismissal of the Attorney-General's

prosecution of 'Lady' Arthur who, after all, had only been found by a policeman while wearing in public 'white stays and chignon of fair colour.'

Being so well-acquainted with Adeline's logic and choice of words to express it I could quite picture her reasoning with Lady Beatrice and further aggravating her mother's offended sensibilities by saying, 'Why shouldn't the poor thing have its white stays, just like I enjoy my black Russian cigarettes without going to the smoke room.' Surely Prime Minister Gladstone was self-righteousness personified in the way he overdramatised the truth by saying that Lord Arthur had been 'enslaved by an unmentionable perversion.' Well, it had been mentioned at last in print.

Then one evening Mrs Pringle telephoned Adeline at the Deptford Institute and asked her to come back immediately as her mother had been taken ill in church and rushed to hospital. No one ever knew exactly what happened in the church, since the old lady went at least twice a day to one or other church to light candles and renew flower vases. On this particular day she had a most upsetting experience at Holy Trinity, Sloane Street but attempts to get a full explanation failed except that somehow a sailor in, or possibly out of, uniform was involved in an act of fellatio or even of the black mass. The Bishop of London and his chancellor certainly did not want the incident talked about. They had had enough trouble at Holy Trinity with that sort of thing.

As if reciting a litany, Lady Beatrice went on and on, 'Another good man will have to go, another good man will have to go, another...' There had, after all, been so many clerics over the years who had had to depart, and quickly. Adeline's family had never viewed Gladstone as anything more than a necessary evil in his role as the Clumber trustee. Yet Beatrice had depended emotionally on Gladstone's cousin Lady Suffield, a Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Alexandra. Between them, they had secured some great churchmen to fill the new High Churches such as Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, second only in grandeur to All Saints, Margaret Street. Not only did they persuade Canon Robert Eyton, the Sub-Almoner to Queen Victoria, to take the Holy Trinity living, but got Arnold Mathew, who liked to style himself the Rev Lord Llandaff, to act as his honorary curate until Mathew set himself up as Archbishop of London in the Old English Catholic Church.

Lady Beatrice adored Canon Eyton as did many other women as well as young men. When the canon had to flee the country in order not to stand trial for homosexual offences he committed at the church, Lady Beatrice retreated, as always in such crises, to her own church in Yorkshire. Peter Anson writes, 'Eyton's name was "mud" at Holy Trinity. Mathew feared that he might be tarred with the same brush. He cast the dust of Chelsea off his feet, and ended his associations with the Church of England.' But Archbishop

Mathew's fellow bishop in the Old English Catholic Church was none other than Frank Shelley-Mills, the favourite boy at Radley of Ernest Bryans who acted as more than the financial adviser to Lady Beatrice's brother, the deformed Duke of Newcastle.

Adeline talked to me at length, as well as writing in *My Zapiski* about her mother's traumatic experience in Holy Trinity Church before I wrote in 1962 of Frank Shelley-Mills's Gurdjieff group around the corner at 39 Elizabeth Street. Lady Beatrice's courage never failed as she drove out the violent Protestant Truth Society when they vandalised High Churches such as Holy Trinity, but she readily surrendered in the High Court. Disputes over the Hope property and homosexual scandals had plagued her whole life, the last of these being at the King's Bench Division in 1933.

Adeline's old friend from Russia, Prince Paul Skoropadsky, was sued by Louis Tufnell, who acted as agent for Maundy Gregory, founder of the Anglo-Ukrainian Council which collected money to place Skoropadsky back as Hetman of the Ukraine. But Gregory not only sold titles, like the earlier Duke of Newcastle when Prime Minister, but he was paying out blackmail to his boyfriends who took more than afternoon tea at the Deepdene, Lady Beatrice's childhood home before a desperate Gregory ran it as an hotel. Brian Howard was in his element if Lady Beatrice was not.

But because of events since Brian Howard's death by suicide in 1958 I believe too much was blamed on his influence over Bridget Parsons and her family. In 1960 when Bridget made headlines in the scandal newspapers, it was that other Oxford friend of Michael Rosse's, Sir John Betjeman, who went into the witness box to explain Bridget's life-style. And in 1980 it was my letters supporting John Betjeman's fight to save Holy Trinity from demolition which got mixed up with the black mass and Frank Shelley-Mills's flagellation, in a case before Mr Justice Jupp in the High Court.

Titled Deeds

I played for the last time among the rock pools and golden sands of County Down in the summer of 1939 for after the outbreak of war the Childhaven holiday home was taken over by the Deaf and Dumb Institute. Quite rightly expecting a blitz on Belfast the government planned to send 17,000 city children into the countryside. But so suspicious were children and parents alike of the unexplored lands beyond the last tram stops, that only 7,000 turned up with gas-masks and enamel mugs on 7 July 1940.

But I was elated. Durham Street Tuberculosis Clinic had impressed upon my mother that my infected lungs would best be served by a long spell in the country, and now here was the government itself paying twice Bishop MacNeice's orphan allowance to feed us and provide all sorts of perks such as free rubber sheets for the bed-wetters. Naturally, being good Protestants, we were jealously watched for it was known that the West of Ulster swarmed with Mickies and Jesuits. My sparse luggage included postcards ready-addressed to Bishop MacNeice back in Belfast, to announce any countryside change of address, and also my Sons of William collarette which I had to take when enrolling at the Orange Hall nearest my billet. Arthur Thorn, an English inspector of taxes in Enniskillen, and his wife took me kindly into their house which had an enormous vegetable garden leading onto the Earl of Belmore's estate at Castle Coole.

The Belfast evacuees were hypnotised by the stately and weighty Lord Belmore driving past our billets in a horse-drawn carriage, complete with liveried coachman on the dickie. We were instructed to salute this great personage, though the greatness appeared only to lift his straw hat to the girls in reply. Indeed, the many presents Lord Armar Belmore gave to the girls produced the somewhat ungrateful jingle, quickly brought to my attention, 'Oh the Lord let a fart and the lady jumped out.' Certainly the lord's bachelor brother, the Honourable Cecil Lowry-Corry, did not jump out of the stately carriage since family precedent and status obliged him to walk down the long drive and along the bus route into Enniskillen. However Cecil always had a friendly word with the evacuees, and especially with the boys.

Besides brother Cecil, four unmarried sisters shared the vast rooms of Castle Coole with Lord Belmore. There was no question of these people rattling about like peas in a drum inside their huge house. They needed every inch of space, partly because Lord Belmore was so huge himself but mostly because he did not speak to his brother and sisters and they all needed space

to avoid each other. In church, however, things were different. As children there had been three brothers who sat in the family pews alongside ten sisters, all in strict order of birth. After one brother and four sisters died and another two sisters married, their places in the pews were left vacant in respect. The lake in front of the castle boasted a fine flock of greylag geese and when one of the Lady Lowry-Corrys drowned in the Erne the family believed her soul had entered into one of the greylags which she loved. The brother Ernest, an intrepid traveller, did not either confirm or deny his reputed death at the hands, or rather mouths of cannibals in 1912.

Two of the sisters, Violet and Dorothy were local historians and when they read my books they disapproved of the libel requirements which resulted in the use of fictitious names for real local characters. So later, in *Songs out of Oriel* I tried to put this wrong right by, 'I wrote *Song of Erne* many years after the events and also far away from the old kingdom of Oriel which is now part of Northern Ireland. But it was not only the television cameras which showed up the flaws in my memory. Two women who read my book remembered the evacuees and were able to give me real names and facts I had forgotten. Thanks must go particularly to Lady Dorothy Lowry-Corry whose own publications were essential reading, and to Miss Mary Lappin who knew the servants on Sir Edward Archdale's demesne at Riversdale as well as the evacuees who went to Master Pinkerton's school at Shanmullagh.'

Both Dorothy and her sister Violet liked my portraits of their family sufficiently for them to bequeath some of their papers to me. This is typical of their writing, 'This Note Book containing information about the interior building and decoration of Castle Coole and about the furniture made for it by the joiners at work there at that time, has been compiled by Lady Violet Lowry-Corry, 4th daughter of the 4th Earl of Belmore who succeeded his father the 3rd Earl on the 17th Dec 1845 when aged 10 years and 8 months and died on the 6 April 1913, who owned Castle Coole for 67 1/4 years.'

Another notebook by Lady Dorothy details the works of art at Castle Coole, including, 'The designs for the ceilings on the ground floor are all signed by James Wyatt and dated 1792. The picture over the chimneypiece is of Anne Elizabeth Honoria, 4th Countess of Belmore, daughter of Captain John Neilson Gladstone R.N. and niece of the Right Honourable W E Gladstone, the Prime Minister.'

When I first saw Cecil Lowry-Corry in butterfly collar and leggings he seemed to have stepped out of a Victorian photograph and a rather cross-looking one at that. But the pride and joy of the Lowry-Corry family was the fact that their mother was Gladstone's niece. Lady Violet was born in 1881, three months before her friend Adeline de la Feld, and that friendship itself was born at Castle Blayney long before the girls were presented to Queen

Victoria. They all delighted in my 1963 dedication of a book on the Azores to Adeline. Peter Montgomery was my official host that year while I was commissioned to write *Ulster*, so I saw a great deal of Lady Dorothy who came over to Blessingbourne not only to consult me about my work but to see her relative Robert Lowry, Peter's nephew and the present owner of Blessingbourne.

Lady Dorothy brought back into my life in the 1960s people I had known and lived with as a Belfast evacuee in the early 1940. We drove along the road between Castle Coole and Castle Blayney where Adeline and Dorothy had gone in the family dog-carts and barouches, though by July 1940 the only Big House person with his own horse and carriage was the Earl of Belmore and that a second-hand one from General Montgomery of Blessingbourne. Because of her girlhood association with this part of Ulster I dedicated another book to Adeline, 'For Adeline de la Feld, remembering another small boy Egorouchka going on another long journey.'

Adeline and I first talked about books in a vast wheatfield in Alberta in 1949 not unlike the steppes little Egorouchka had crossed with his uncle in the 1888 story by Chekhov and translated by Adeline in 1915. Adeline had typed the first draft of *Song of Erne* when we were living in Canada, and she vicariously re-lived my experiences as a Belfast evacuee of the woods and lakes around her girlhood haunts of Castle Coole. Because of her rebellion against her father and the other two Robber Baronets, Adeline delighted in how the poor man at his castle viewed the owners of 'damn Family Places' especially as she was aware that my childhood meeting with Lord Belmore's family was not merely an introduction to aristocratic life but my entry into the Russian spy ring dominated in my case, by Anthony Blunt. Before becoming Blunt's lover at Cambridge, Peter Montgomery had been to school at Wellington like his other gay friends before him, the Hon Cecil Lowry-Corry and the Hon Harold Nicolson.

In July 1940 while I was presenting my credentials at the Orange Lodge in Enniskillen the Hon Cecil came in but did not speak to me. A few days later I was going home after fishing in Lough Erne and took a short cut across the castle domain and met Cecil, also walking home. He stuttered badly but eventually I realised he was more than just head of the local Orange Lodge but no less than Grand Treasurer of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland. He had sat on Orange and Black Chapters with my grandfather and other members of my family and naturally knew Canon Maguire and his brother the Rev Scott Maguire, Grand Chaplain of the Grand Orange Order. I found it even more alarming that Cecil, like Canon Maguire, was on the Protestant Orphan Society which still provided for my sisters and me. It dawned on me that I would have to behave myself and keep out of trouble with

such an influential figure around especially one who went so often to Belfast, not least as a Visiting Justice of that city.

But the Hon Cecil seemed distinctly interested in my family background and he invited me into the castle for a bar of rationed chocolate. My size for twelve years greatly surprised him and he suggested I should start wearing long trousers since I was bursting more than the seams of my shorts. For many years I had been severely beaten by my mother's evangelical relations for having 'a cornerboy's hump' keeping my hands in my trouser-pockets, so now I naturally felt very flattered not only to have my body inspected but to be told I was more of a man than a boy.

In a kindly way he bade me remember my family's place in the Orange Order, and be self-disciplined. He himself had been to a great English school called Wellington and had been properly flogged and not hit about the knuckles like boys in my school. From a chest of drawers he then produced a black rod and assured me it had often scarred his bottom but made him the man he was today. He pointed to a large photograph which I recognised from a similar one on our school history book as 'William Gladstone - The Grand Old man.' What the history book did not tell me but Cecil did, was that young Gladstone had been to Eton and had his character disciplined by the flogging there. I felt overawed in such a grand building with such a grand person but I did not like the grand black rod with a silver top.

Clearly, Cecil loved talking of his schooldays and of his pride in the public school system and he spoke of Ernest Bryans and Radley. That school was founded in 1847 and among its first Ulster boys were the Hon Henry Crichton, son of the 3rd Earl of Erne, and John Lonsdale Bryans, son of the Rev William Bryans. Cecil was related to the local Crichton family whom Anthony Blunt first met in 1921 when his father, the Rev Stanley Blunt, became the incumbent of St John's, Paddington, where Lord Erne's son and daughter lived with their sons, Blunt's exact contemporaries.

Cecil's numerous councils and committees must have given him a vast acquaintance, yet he came across as a lonely figure and seemed reluctant to let me go. His father had been Under Secretary of State at the Home Office until going as Governor of New South Wales during the years of Uncle William Gladstone's first term as Prime Minister, so to the exotic history of brother Ernest being devoured by cannibals were added exotic mementoes of Australia which filled Castle Coole and which Cecil insisted on showing me. Cecil died in 1949 to be succeeded as Earl of Belmore by a cousin whose countess came from Australia and she recalled me as 'a wild young poet with curly hair,' as I wrote in *Ulster*. During the 1940s Cecil quoted many odd lines of poetry which I put into my books, such as

The year that I was born my father had the pox,

I was suckled by a bullock and christened by a fox.

Some time passed before Cecil explained that a Rector Fox had christened the son of the smallpoxed earl whose brother went to Radley. As an evacuee I had seen children not infrequently going into the byre to suckle a cow or goat but I was nonplussed by the earl's method of suckling until Cecil explained that a Mrs Bullock had wet-nursed him, as presumably she did also her own son, Shan Bullock the novelist.

For many years Cecil's relations sat on the Radley Council with Ernest Bryans, and Canon Lonsdale Bryans and his family returned to their original home in County Tyrone where the canon's schoolfriend Conolly William Lecky-Browne-Lecky had a considerable estate which since 1921 had been the home of his son Tibby Lecky-Browne-Lecky famous as a female impersonator on and off stage. Tibby's transvestism was known throughout Ireland and generally tolerated, though my mother was extremely nervous of me meeting Tibby and the younger members of the Lonsdale Bryans family. The year before my mother married into the Bryans family she had been a servant at the Belfast nursing home where Tibby's father died and she had been outraged by Tibby's most unladylike behaviour for she would not be treated badly simply because she was a low-grade servant and certainly not by 'that' in its paint and powder. Now here I was, starting puberty, and there was the Grand Treasurer of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, the future Earl of Belmore, telling me that I must meet Tibby.

Cecil showed me press cuttings with photographs of Tibby as Lady Windermere, although they took second place to others of the ballet dancer Sir Anton Dolin, especially in his role as Satan in the ballet *Job* for which Peter Montgomery's cousin, Ralph Vaughan Williams, started composing the music in 1927. Cecil totally intrigued me by his choice of photographs and companions. I was not to know that one day I would not only inherit a portrait of Dolin as Satan painted by Hedi Pillitz but also her portrait of the still-living Dame Alicia Markova who co-founded the Festival Ballet Company with Dolin.

As well as being intrigued I also felt completely bewildered by that first visit to Cecil at Castle Coole for it seemed peculiar that such a leading Orangeman and church leader should show photos of his friends playing the role of Satan with barely a stitch of clothes on, as well as a Big House owner dressed as a woman. But it was talk of 'proper' caning on the bare bottom that worried me for I neither wanted to give nor get strokes from the silver-topped cane Cecil so treasured from his school days at Wellington. Nevertheless, I gladly accepted his invitation to return to the castle as well as Orange meetings.

Some weeks later I changed my billet to Joe Brown's, the under-

gardener on the estate of Sir Edward Archdale, another cousin of Peter Montgomery. Here, like the Childhaven holiday home, I was obliged to share a bed with an older boy. It was, however, for chasing the girls that we were caned by Master Archibald Pinkerton at Shanmullagh Public Elementary School.

In the 1989 edition of *Ulster* I wrote, 'Opposite our house lived the beautiful Mary Neill, whose husband kept the breadserver's horse which luckily kicked none of us boys when we ran under its belly to prove to each other we were not "cissies." I express my thanks to Mrs Neill's grandson, John Keyes, the Newry Arts Director, who researched my life on the Bog Meadows for the BBC and took me around old haunts. Thanks also to Paul Yates of UTV whose family lived next door to us and were most tolerant of my father's crowded pigeon loft and of my backyard's rampant ivy which threatened to engulf their outdoor lavatory.'

Although John Keyes trained as an actor in his native Belfast I remember him with the famous if somewhat bizarre Anew McMaster Shakespearean Company in Dublin. He played in the West End production of *Where the Rainbow Ends* with Anton Dolin and later, as though on pilgrimage, we both joined that international cast of actors and politicians who went to Alfred Arnold's farmhouse on the island of Gozo after Anthony Blunt, with obsequious gratitude for his immunity from prosecution, brought such pressure to bear that Alfred had to leave Belfast.

For over thirty years reviewers and television crews have looked at my life as seen through my writing, and also by the impression made by my books on people who acutally remembered me as a boy in 1930s Belfast or in the 1940s as part of Anthony Blunt's circle. People interviewed by John Keyes included his own mother who clearly recalled my parents and grandparents. Nearer to Mrs Keyes's house than mine was the newspaper shop presided over by Robert Greacen's two aunts, and that poet has written, what others have also thought, that 'There was always a faint air of mystery about' me.

Greacen further recalled 1960 when someone at a cocktail party remarked sarcastically to me, 'I hear your father was a plumber.' I replied, 'O dear no, nothing as grand as a plumber - only a window-cleaner.' Robert Greacen also recalled, 'A proletarian had once shouted' at me 'Go back to your Eton study!' Those events of 1960 did actually happen as did John Boyd at the BBC in that same year questioning both Robert Greacen and me because we had 'so little trace of a Belfast accent.'

In 1914 many men from Donegall Avenue went to fight in the war-to-end-all-wars and some of the survivors, such as my grandfather Richard Bryans, eventually died from the effects of mustard gas. His friend, Captain John Gray was the local historian cited by Bishop MacNeice in his books.

Captain Gray's daughter, Florrie, had a relation, or close friend, Irene Sheridan who came from Fermanagh to work in Belfast and for five years was our lodger so forging links between the Grays and us. When Canon and Mrs Lonsdale Bryans came with Dr Mary Wills their search for new recruits to the Egypt General Mission concerned them more than research into family trees, although the most assiduous of the family's genealogists, Max Bryans, 50 years later in the 1980s was still writing me letters about his probings into the farmers and clergy, the lamplighters and breadservers who, in my recollections, formed the trunk of the Bryans family tree. Young Lonsdale Bryans the globe-trotter would occasionally turn up at our house with beautiful clothes for my mother better suited to Tibby Lecky-Browne-Lecky's drawing-room than the parlour at Donegall Avenue. In this way there was 'always a faint air of mystery' about my whole family and not just me.

But in 1940, it was my 'swanky' English accent, as well as my height that astonished the Fermanagh people so that in the end I had to get my mother to send my birth certificate to prove my age, and even then that did nothing to stop the gossip that I was a German spy. The person who years later shouted that I should go back to my Eton study, knew that Guy Burgess and I liked visiting Eton before going on to see Adeline de la Feld's family in nearby Windsor forest.

My presence as a 12 year old evacuee in wartime Fermanagh certainly made a lasting impression on Helen Patterson, a local girl, onto whose countryside, two-teacher Shanmullagh School I dropped, it seemed, like a bomb. In her interview with John Keyes in 1989 Helen told their BBC audience that she remembered 'very vividly going back to school after the summer holidays...and there, right round the room were these crowds of children.' And what children! The Belfast evacuees' clothes were more modern, their behaviour livelier than the country children's. They were a bit afraid of each other, she thought, and 'some of them fitted in well, some of them didn't.' I alas came into the latter category. Indeed, Helen Patterson remembered my disruptive antics so well that as a school teacher in later life and faced with similarly wild pupils, she reminded herself that I had become a writer in spite of rather because of school.

In *Song of Erne* I did not seek to excuse my behaviour at Shanmullagh School and wrote of Master Archibald Pinkerton, 'A headmaster presided, a man renowned as a good wielder of the cane. Though he could still cane well, and I saw him do it, his prime was over long ago. I was now very big, and after one or two tussles with me, he used a different method.' The village children and the evacuees vied for superiority not only over bad classroom behaviour but over smutty talk in the playground.

We all had different versions of the song, 'She'll be comin' round the

mountain when she comes' and endless variations on what she would be wearing. A song new to the evacuees but immediately taken up by us was 'It was half-past one and the dance had just begun, singing Nellie keep your belly close to mine...' By half-past four he had her on the floor while still managing to sing 'Nellie keep your belly close to mine' which the Belfast contingent were bellowing out at the tops of their voices outside one day when Master Pinkerton's head appeared in the window. He blew a whistle and cut the lunch-break short. Trembling with rage he got me and two other evacuee boys in front of the entire school to cane us for 'bringing such filth from the slums of Belfast.' I saw red. We could have expected a caning for our lewdness but we had not brought it from the 'slums' of Belfast. We were proud of Belfast and nobody was going to hold us and our city in contempt.

I was strong enough to attack Archibald Pinkerton and seized the cane and walloped his backside to the amazement of the other children. The master knew his temper had led him to an indiscretion in referring to our background as 'slums.' It was stalemate because he could not call in the school inspector. In *Song of Erne* I wrote of his 'different method. I had a flair for mathematics, and when the seniors failed to solve a problem the headmaster would appeal to me, "Can you tackle this Robbie?" With pride at stake I willingly co-operated. My memory was retentive, especially for poetry. He put *As You Like It* in front of me, and playing on my pride again, asked me to study fat chunks of it. The village took an inordinate interest in its evacuees. A simultaneous rise in population and influx of outsiders had never been known before. Johnny-Longlegs provided an endless subject of gossip for the women. They maintained that he was much older than everybody said, sixteen or seventeen at least in their estimation. After all, everyone knew that he went to the local dances, smoked openly with the young men on the village bridge, and could do a man's work on the farm. The women accused his mother of wanting to save him from conscription which was rumoured at that time, and of supporting him on government funds. I hated this tittle-tattle, for Johnny-Longlegs was a name given to me at school because of my height, and the village had soon caught on.'

Nobody ever believed me about my age. At a sports day in a nearby parish, they debarred me from racing in my own age group, and even the one above me. I finally ran with those of fifteen to eighteen, and came in third. Suspicions were aggravated by my way of speaking which had little trace of an Irish accent. But had it much trace of an English working-class accent either?

English soldiers from the nearby camps who came to the village dances, called me 'The Squire' because, as they put it, I spoke like Lord Haw-Haw. They may well have been right, because in the last show at St Simon's

church hall before I left for Fermanagh, I had impersonated the supercilious voice of William Joyce, known as Lord Haw-Haw, who regularly broadcast anti-British propaganda from Germany for the Nazis. I also had a precocious squirearchical way of making the dances go with a swing. We only had old-fashioned dances such as The Sets and The Lancers in which we joined arms and went around in circles as fast as possible, the best dancers lifting the girls off their feet to shrieks of female delight.

If the village was suspicious of my voice, it fascinated the Hon Cecil and formed the basis of our friendship. I not only reported regularly to Cecil at the Orange Hall but also got involved with his and his sisters' work with Soldiers' Comforts Funds and Silver Paper Collections, the Coffee Van Canteen and Miss Millie Trimble's Musical Evenings. They provided me with a bicycle so that I could be the Shanmullagh agent.

The telephone gave Cecil his worst agonies of stuttering and he thought my voice ideal for speaking and that it would get me 'far.' So in my best Lord Haw-Haw voice I began making telephone calls on his behalf, and felt as though I was back on St Simon's hall platform, acting a part as I addressed army officers and titled ladies. I had to tell Mrs Richardson at Rossfad that I had a score of hand-knitted socks and a dozen balaclavas to deliver, a somewhat mundane message for a grand lady such as Mrs Richardson who had been well able to cope when bad weather forced Queen Wilhelmina and Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands to abandon a journey to New York and instead to be well catered for at Rossfad.

But Cecil had other plans beside socks and balaclavas and he soon got me to play jokes on his friends by telephone which his stutter prohibited. He encouraged me to talk in a high camp voice to the young army officers with 'Is that you my dear' before handing over to Cecil. Any lingering doubts I had about his homosexuality finally vanished, but shyness prevented him from any advances other than a fond hand on my knee as I telephoned.

Liz, a parlour-maid from one of the Big Houses, became my particular dancing partner. At the edge of the forest owned by Sir Edward Archdale stood a hayshed, remote from other estate buildings and used for feeding out-wintering bullocks. Local lovers used it too, and Liz wanted me to prove my age by seeing if I had pubic hair and could do a man's job in the hayshed. This happy arrangement went on for some months until William Service, the land steward to Sir Edward, came upon us while we were making love. There followed what, in Shakespearean stage directions, are called alarums and excursions.

Like all towns throughout the United Kingdom at that early stage of the war, Enniskillen had hoardings which carried dire warnings about the dangers of venereal diseases, these VD posters being especially aimed at

garrison towns such as Enniskillen where many army camps had mushroomed both inside as well as outside the grounds of Lord Belmore's Castle Coole. Land steward Service knew exactly why so many soldiers came to the village dances and that it was not to get a pair of socks from Mrs Richardson of Rossfad.

Land steward Service reported my hayshed deeds and in his role as District Master, the Hon Cecil sent for me. Cecil's stutter nearly brought him to a standstill over words beginning with 'st' so only with extreme difficulty could he tell me what I already knew, namely that Sir Edward's land steward had found me out with 'dirty women.' This was Master Pinkerton's 'slums of Belfast' all over again, but this time I did not fly into a rage, because the spectre of VD haunted me and several soldiers at the local camp openly bragged in army slang that they had the 'holy clappers of fuck, fuck, fuck' and so could not drink alcohol at the pub or tumble in the hayshed.

As instructed, I had drunk lots of water and now held up a jar for Cecil to see the clarity of its contents. I knew that Cecil had been to 'college' in England and held numerous positions in Church and Unionist affairs as well as in the Orange Order. I did not question that he was qualified to find out if I was poxed. Yet it bewildered me, to say the least, that he should want to do so. The many telephone calls I had made to his young soldier friends had taught me much about sexual disease and before putting the phone down Cecil would invariably say, 'And don't do anything I wouldn't do.' But if VD was such a horror why was Cecil now looking at the clarity of my pee and inhaling it as though the bouquet of an old claret.

But, like the 'dirty woman' herself, Cecil now wanted to know if I was capable of full sexual intercourse and that meant, and here he had trouble with the 'sp', taking a sp..sp.. specimen of my s.. s.. semen. We were now behind closed doors speaking fraternally as Orange brothers, and to help me, Cecil began an act of fellatio. I had to tell him when I was about to ejaculate, so that he could put yet another specimen in another jar. When this happened, Cecil made these strange proceedings even more confusing by announcing that he 'never sw..sw..swallowed.' If he 'never' swallowed, did that mean he did this frequently, even with those he suspected of having the dreaded VD? As soon as he declared me free of disease I saw the whole proceeding had simply been a ploy by the shy Cecil to make sexual contact he would never have dared with a boy whose family Cecil knew so well.

As Grand Treasurer of the Orange Order, Cecil had gone during many years to headquarters in Belfast when the Rev William Maguire and his three ordained sons ran affairs, William being widely known as 'Orange Maguire.' One of the sons, Canon Charles Maguire, had been chosen as a member and secretary of the delegation sent to North America by Sir Edward Carson in

1919 to explain the forthcoming state of Northern Ireland. The Maguires were an ancient Fermanagh clan from the days when they ruled as Kings of Oriel, as that part of western Ireland was called, and by 1940 when I met Cecil Lowry-Corry, politicians acknowledged our rector at St Simon's, Charles Maguire, as the unrivalled authority on the province. When Charles left his father's Methodist church and joined the Church of Ireland, it was Hellfire Jack Bryans who took over Orange Maguire's mantle as a preacher and who became head of the Orange Order at the time William McGrath of Tara Lodge was buggering boys by force at Kincora Home.

In his book **Who Framed Colin Wallace?** Paul Foot wrote, 'In a report in the **Sunday World** on 10 May 1987 Liam Clarke wrote McGrath was an agent whose first experience of spying had come in the 1950s when he smuggled bibles into Russia as a front for intelligence gathering by M16.' By then Liam Clarke had interviewed both Jack Bryans and me in various newspapers and when a man died, who had been very much Cecil Lowry-Corry's soul-mate, Liam Clarke devoted the whole front page of a Sunday tabloid to describing the soul-mate's involvement with spying and the gay scene without any evidence concerning spying for the Russians. The poor man had died a particularly terrible death as a result of syphilis, which shocked many far from Fermanagh.

In relation to Ulster affairs Clarke is also the reporter who helped Ken Livingstone, the MP who stated that the origins of the Kincora child abuse ring 'dated back to his (Anthony Blunt's) days at Cambridge where he had become involved sexually with a group of upper class paedophiles from Northern Ireland.' Blunt certainly met Cecil Lowry-Corry in the 1920s and was sexually involved with one of the local soldiers, Alan Price, but I think it most unlikely that Cecil established a group of upper class paedophiles that led to the scandalous activities at Kincora.

I was a cheeky, very mature boy from Belfast looking far older than my 12 years, but the stuttering, shy Cecil certainly made no attempt to have anal sex with me either by force or by bribes of chocolate. He had to resort to a VD scare to get my trousers down, but I kept up such good relations with him that in 1963 Peter Montgomery, as President of the Arts Council, took me back to write about life at Castle Coole. But Ken Livingstone sent another of his Irish reporters, Frank Doherty, to interview me about Blunt's friends, Lord Mountbatten and Alan Price, and in 1991 I had to explain to Mr Justice French in the High Court that the published version of the interview was a gross exaggeration.

In 1940 an anxious Liz awaited news of my interview with the Hon Cecil. She wanted to know exactly what happened and so, lacking a man's common sense although having a man's body, I told her. She exploded with

one of the neighbourhood's choice sayings, 'The filthy bugger. He should be shot with a ball of his own dung.' Cecil's celibacy and his love of giving boys presents such as bicycles were well-known locally and recognised for what they represented, as was his brother Lord Belmore's penchant for pinching a pretty girl's bottom, even a parlour-maid's such as Liz's.

But Shanmullagh's was not wholly a Protestant society since a good number were Catholics with their own chapel up the road in the cure of Canon Bernard Lappin. Sir Edward Archdale had been the first Minister of Agriculture and Commerce while his cousin Hugh de Fellenberg Montgomery became Father of the Northern Ireland Senate, when George V opened the new parliament on 22 June 1921. By 1925 Sir Edward made Irish headlines by proudly proclaiming that of his 109 civil servants only 4 were Catholics and of them 3 had been 'turned over to him.' As a Grand Master of the Orange Order Sir Edward felt it keenly when the grandson and name-sake of the Senate Father became a Catholic. Mark Bence-Jones wrote in **Twilight of the Ascendancy**, 'General Montgomery's father, Hugh de Fellenberg Montgomery, who was a member of the Northern Ireland Senate until his death in 1924 and also a Privy Councillor, had been a staunch opponent of Sectarianism, though this had not prevented him from disinheriting his eldest grandson when he became a Catholic.'

At the time I was going to the hayshed with Liz in 1940 Hugh Montgomery, the disinherited grandson, was at his diplomatic post in Ankara, before being transported during the war from Switzerland in a sealed and blacked out compartment as the First Secretary to the Holy See with his friend, the future Pope Paul VI. When the Pope made Hugh a Papal Chamberlain Canon Bernard Lappin was overjoyed, for by then Sir Edward had died and his stately home made into an artificial insemination centre for the Ministry of Agriculture for which Sir Edward had been first minister.

In spite of such allegiances the countryside remained free from sectarian trouble when the evacuees arrived in Shanmullagh with their Orange songs and collarettes. Indeed, the whiskered Protestant rector, responsible for the village school used to go to tea with Canon Lappin who had a special tea-cup with a moustache-lip to keep the rector's whiskers dry. There to serve tea was the parish priest's niece, Mary Lappin and on 30 March 1937 Sir Edward Archdale wrote to her, 'Very stupid of me but I did not recognise you yesterday when I met you walking through. I hope you have a good and comfortable job.'

That letter is one of many sent to me by Mary Lappin, whose job over many years, like my own, was as a critic on the **Irish Press** where she always gave an ecumenical slant to religious affairs. Her letters invariably referred to the Montgomery brothers as well as to the boys and girls in Master

Pinkerton's class who witnessed my fight about the 'slums of Belfast.' Some of these boys and girls had grandchildren of their own, as did Liz, when Mary Lappin came to a lecture I gave in Enniskillen Library in 1988.

Also in 1988 the international press gave space to an anniversary which meant much to Mary and me. Fifty years had passed since the body of W B Yeats had been brought home from France for burial in Drumcliffe churchyard where his grandfather had been the Protestant rector. Mary has for long been the public relations officer of the International Yeats Summer School which attracts literati, scholars and others of the poet's admirers.

Yeats had died in France in 1939 and was buried in what some have described as a pauper's grave, others say it was only a temporary arrangement until he could be taken back to Ireland. This French burial surprised and offended many people because his once-close friend Evan Tredegar was then in the South of France with his famous yacht that often carried its passengers to the West of Ireland where, as well as the Mountbatten's castle, lay Drumcliffe churchyard in which Yeats had wished to be buried. But although some of the best writing about Evan's black magic rites is connected with Yeats in the West of Ireland, the extremely rich Evan callously allowed his friend such a burial. When I first heard about this, it did not surprise me. I knew Evan could switch to a violent dislike of people who were once his close companions.

The Journals of Denton Welch give an example, 'Another story was of a Russian boy whom Guy found in Paris shut out of Lord Tredegar's house. The Russian boy, who was rather drunk and distraught, told Guy that Tredegar seemed to have turned against him for no reason. Guy, who was going to see Tredegar, decided to walk home with the Russian boy and try to calm him... Just as they were crossing the Seine, the boy jumped on the parapet and was about to throw himself in, but Guy caught his arm and pulled him down. The gendarmes blew whistles and were about to run the boy in, but Guy said he was drunk and had had a row..'

Like Francis Rose's stoker jumping to his death at the Seamen's Mission, this group always featured suicides among young men. Evan's anger flared up when he unexpectedly met me in Paris where I had gone, not to visit him, but Dil de Rohan and George Gurdjieff. After Ouspensky's death in 1947, many British followers, including Kenneth Walker, turned to 'The Master' in Paris.

Dil de Rohan was designing for Pierre Balmain but not spending every evening with Alice B Toklas. In **How Do You Do?** Dil writes, 'One evening on returning to the hotel from Balmain the telephone rang, a voice from the past it was, Mary Oliver's "Darling we can't get a room here at the Ritz or anywhere else, can you help?" 'Yes, come here and take a bath while I go to

a cocktail party at Elizabeth Ardens in the Place Vendome.' Returning from the party Dil found Mary and John Willis 'both in high spirits.'

Because Dil de Rohan and Mary Oliver frequented Gurdjieff's centre at 6 Rue des Colonels Rénauds, some people concluded 'the higher learning' and dancing involved more homosexuality than in fact it did. True, among garlands of dried camel-meat sausages, the bottles of armagnac and calvados, yak hooves flown in from Tibet, gilt mirrors and naked light bulbs one would come across John Willis, said to be a favourite grandson of Gurdjieff, and John's camp squeals would ring out as he tried to interest rich Americans in buying Francis Rose's paintings or shares of the company Gurdjieff founded to manufacture false eyelashes and glass eyes. Nevertheless, I knew that 'The Tiger of Turkestan' had more profound things to offer than the weird practices of his adherents at 39 Elizabeth Street in London or the flagellation in Sussex churches which so obsessed the Rev Frank Shelley-Mills.

My book **Gateway to the Khyber** records my impressions of the love and fights among the boys and girls I knew in Paris who made up the international core of Gurdjieff's students. Evan Tredegar had tried to press his own way of life on several of these people and, like the Russian boy, one medical student tried to commit suicide when Evan 'turned against him for no reason.' As a parting, and as it turned out, a last gesture towards me, Evan spat in my face when I told him that yes, it was true, I had been given one of the most prized of Percy Bysshe Shelley's relics by Evan's arch-enemy, the Rev Frank Shelley-Mills.

I can remember from early childhood how afraid Belfast women were of being spat on by gypsies. And as a twelve-year-old I knew that Liz at Shanmullagh would take her revenge on Cecil Lowry-Corry by putting unpleasantries into his food when he dined at the Big House where she worked. But looking back later, I could think of nothing that Liz, in her indignation at being called 'a dirty woman' could put in Cecil's food that could compare with the other essential ingredients that accompanied the blood and semen of Aleister Crowley's and the rich Lord Tredegar's communion cup in the black mass. It was a wonder people were not poisoned, for as James Moore wrote in his Gurdjieff's biography, Mrs Betty Middleton Murry 'seemingly tried to poison Heppenstall with an overdose of calomel.'

Rayner Heppenstall had long given up being a cook/disciple at John Middleton Murry's study centre when he joined Louis MacNeice at the BBC and wrote a satirical dismissal of the spurious theory that only practising male homosexuals such as Oscar Wilde were true artists. On many occasions both in and out of the High Court I endorsed Heppenstall's scorn for this homosexual nonsense.

Mary Lappin told my Enniskillen audience in 1988 her view, and that

of Yeat's son and daughter, of what the coffin contained when it arrived from France after the war to be buried in Drumcliffe churchyard with Louis MacNeice and Maurice Collis among the attendant writers. Collis and MacNeice argued that the remains were in fact those of a French pauper with a club foot which Mary and the Yeats family deny. However, there could be no denying that the bones Evan Tredegar used in his black magic came from one of Ireland's oldest cemeteries, Lisgoole Abbey.

On 18 September 1966 Mary wrote to me, 'It poured all week so it was not until today that the opportunity to "slip out to Drumcliffe" came my way. It was really a golden day - thank you for the little chore. After an hour's frustrated searching in the graveyard it dawned on me to look in the church - happy thought. Copies of Memorial Tablets to the Joneses enclosed.' The first of two tablets which interested me read, 'Sacred to the memory of Michael Jones Esq., of Lisgoole Abbey, and Late of Cregg House, who departed this life on 20th Aug. 1864 at the advanced age of 92 years.' And the second, a memorial to his son, 'Michael Obins Seeley Jones who died at Kingstown on 4th April 1860, Aged 40 years.'

Today Cregg House in Sligo is a training school for mentally handicapped children run by the Sisters of La Sagesse, but when Parson Yeats was Vicar of Drumcliffe, 1811 to 46, the staunchly Protestant Jones family did not suffer the children of the Catholic community kindly. There is no memorial to Mrs Michael Obins Seeley Jones and when she died on the 10 April 1892 her will directed that Lisgoole Abbey in Fermanagh and Sligo interests be sold for the benefit of the Protestant Orphan Society, Rossory Church and other charities. These included building a structure, rather grand for those days, called Jones Memorial Bible School. However when the Rev Isaac Pratt became rector of Rossory he personally got a ladder and chipped away the word 'Bible' because nobody had so insulted the Roman Catholic community as well as breeding hostility with the Protestant charities as Mrs Isabella Diana Jones.

Then a family called Johnston who had gone to America and made a fortune in carpets returned home and bought Lisgoole Abbey and its extensive grounds where I went to the Jones Memorial School after leaving Master Pinkerton's Shanmullagh. Many army huts for both American and British soldiers stood around the abbey's land, and I only saw Johnston-the-Yankee-Millionaire on Sundays flashing by in his large car as he went to Rossory Church for a sermon by his brother-in-law Archdeacon Isaac Pratt. Robert Johnston was something of a mystery man who did not approve of the Orange Order and though always a member of the Select Vestry at Rossory Church liked to spend part of the winter at the Savoy Hotel in London watching plays recommended by his friends Sir Shane Leslie and Lord Tredegar, both well-

known converts to the Catholic faith.

Robert Johnston and his wife appeared to take an interest in my writing about Lisgoole Abbey and because Shane Leslie had opened his literary career with a book called **Songs of Oriel** the Johnstons suggested that I too go back to Fermanagh's distant history in **Songs Out of Oriel**, and in its prefatory note I said, 'His ability to bring Irish history alive as though it were today - and to make today a living part of history - led Robert Johnston of Lisgoole Abbey not only to open his home to the BBC cameras but also to delve into his remarkable memory for many of the old Fermanagh sayings and verses I have used throughout this new book. Robert Johnston remembered very clearly Christy Graham who as a boy had served "Famine Soup" at the Abbey gates in 1847 before becoming land-steward at Lisgoole and the father of Lizzie and James Graham who were themselves old when they took in the Belfast evacuee in World War Two. Just as the BBC focused its cameras mainly on the Graham family at their Granshagh farm and their childhood in the steward's lodge at Lisgoole Abbey, I trust this book will be seen above all else as a tribute to James and Lizzie Graham.'

When I went to Jones Memorial School in 1941 the school's van was a large, covered wagon pulled by Kerr's upstanding mare called Molly, although on reaching hills the children got out and walked. In 1988 I was invited to visit Jones Memorial School and found a large complex of modern buildings presided over by Headmaster Kerr whose family mare had taken us home so often nearly fifty years before. The new school had been built a mile or so away, but because of Mrs Jones's endowment also bore her name.

She was born Isabella Diana Denham, the daughter of an evangelical Doctor Denham who in 1814 leased Nixon Hall. Five hundred years after Christ walked to Capernaum 'the wisest man in Ireland or Britain' found his journey's end in the parish of Cleenish. The **Annals of Ulster** record that in AD 1100 a new church of St Sinell was founded. According to the **Register of Clogher** St Sinell had received the island site from the King of Oriel because the monk had cured the king's daughter. The Pope writing from Constance in 1414 commanded the Archdeacon of Clogher to assign the vicarage of St Sinell worth four marks to Aeneas MacGilla. But when shouts of 'No Popery, no quarter' sent the Irish down like cattle to death in the Bloody Pass, the son of King William III's quartermaster took the best of St Sinell's ancient stones and built a splendid mansion called Nixon Hall after the quartermaster's family. The Nixon sons were keen on duelling and added more than a large acreage to their Plantation score.

But no pistol shot could lay the shadows of dark omens haunting the hall built from the old parish church stone, so the Nixons moved out and leased the mansion to Dr Denham who being such a renowned evangelical

preacher was not afraid of Roman Catholic superstitions. But the duelling Nixons had such a bad name in the county that Dr Denham renamed the house Fairwood Park. Six years later he also named his daughter Isabella Diana, who went as a teenage bride to Michael Obins Seeley Jones of Cregg House, Sligo where Parsons Yeats held the living of Drumcliffe. They had a son called Obins born in 1839 and then went to live in the historic Lisgoole Abbey.

Long before the Franciscans of Lisgoole came to the abbey, when the Maguires were Kings of Oriel, generations of other monks sought the peace where St Aedh built his sixth-century cell and lived obedient to the Rule of St Patrick.

Through centuries the Franciscans hoped for a return to the abbey after the monks were driven out at the time of William III's victory. Since the Franciscans still inscribed Lisgoole as 'Vacat' on their Chapter Roll, the widowed Mrs Jones instructed her son Obins to secure his inheritance by destroying the cemetery which gave the Franciscans faith in resurrection at Lisgoole. So the order was made to rase the Celtic crosses and Greek urns of the populous cemetery and make it blossom as a rose garden. The gardeners were further ordered to exhume abbots and sacristans, the kings and their confessors, Adam O'Keenan the historian who had rested at the abbey since 1373. Not content to disturb the dust of those who ruled the kingdom of Oriel, Widow Jones demanded every bone of 'thousands of the humble laity' to be likewise cast upon the water of Lough Erne that was not deep enough to cover them.

Such ignominy disturbed more than mortal dust and if it drove the Franciscans to desist from further mention of Lisgoole at Triennial Chapter meetings the public outcry, Protestant as well as the relations of those Catholics once buried at Lisgoole, also drove Mrs Jones's only son and heir out of his mind. Old Christy Graham who had served 'Famine Soup' by the abbey gates in 1847 was for many years land steward to the Jones family by the 1870s when he acted as nurse to demented Mr Obins. Sudden death struck both gardeners who had dug up the monastery cemetery and not all Drumcliffe's common prayer or the divine rights and privileges of the landed gentry could save Obins Jones from a violent end and early grave on 3 June 1878.

As a reward for his tireless care in the nursing of her dying son, as well as for his good stewardship of the abbey estate over forty years, Mrs Jones bought her faithful servant Christy Graham a thirty-five acre farm adjoining her girlhood home of Nixon Hall. The Nixon family never returned to the unlucky house built by their ancestors and as no other tenant could be found for the supposedly haunted house after Dr Denham left it, the place stood empty for years except for gamblers who used the deserted mansion at night.

Nobody ever found out whether accident or arson overturned the gamblers' rush-candle, but certainly they set fire to the unloved house built from St Sinell's ancient church.

In *Songs Out of Oriel* I wrote, 'Before that century burnt itself out with blackmail soup and evangelical white lies Christy Graham, land steward of Lisgoole saw a phoenix rise from the hall's ashes for some of those stones twice-dressed by medieval and by Georgian hands became Granshagh's dwelling where in my day the proud sandstone still remained dressed upon the undressed kitchen floor as churn was dashed and dancers rocked, and where nobody save the rector hung his hat on the back of the front door. Rector Kingston never knew what scampering ensued to find dentures and the silver teapot which Widow Jones little thought would be poured by the land steward's daughter in a house built of stones salvaged from her childhood home.'

But Mrs Jones's Protestant zeal lived on for she decreed that a room in the new Granshagh farmhouse should be set aside for use by the Orange Lodge. And there to see this latest addition to his international empire was the 4th Earl of Erne, the Imperial Grand Master of the Orange Order. In my circle, the two people who knew Lord Erne's family and Ulster estates intimately were Anthony Blunt and Peter Montgomery.

In 1921 the evangelical Rev Stanley Blunt became vicar of St John's in Paddington. In the two mansions opposite St John's west door lived the Hon Arthur Crichton and his sister Lady Mabel Hamilton-Stubber, children of Lord Erne. The vicar's youngest son Anthony was born in 1907, the same year as Arthur Crichton's boy Michael, and Lady Mabel's by her first marriage, Gerald Grosvenor. The boys grew up as Anthony's close friends and were to prove Blunt's useful allies in the 1960's when Gerald and his younger brother, Pud, became the 4th and 5th Dukes of Westminster.

After my book about Fermanagh, *Song of Erne* came out in 1960, Arthur Crichton wrote of his experiences as a boy at his parents' home, Crom Castle, in the 1880s when Mrs Jones presided at Lisgoole Abbey, 'The church at Crom belongs to the Earl of Erne, and the clergyman was paid by the Earl and called "Chaplain to his Lordship." The Crom chaplain during most of my life was the Reverend John Haughton Steele, son of the Headmaster of Portora. We always called him "The Heron." Religion and politics were discussed all the time... I would say that all the photos were amateur except the big groups on the occasions of visits of Royalty and Viceroy...'.

Although Anthony Blunt liked going with his closest friend from school, Louis MacNeice, to stay at Carrickfergus Rectory in East Ulster he soon preferred going west to stay with his Cambridge lover Peter Montgomery at Blessingbourne and wining-and-dining at Crom Castle where there was an

abundance to drink, unlike the temperance strictly observed at Carrickfergus. The Rev Dr William Steele had been Oscar Wilde's headmaster at Portora Royal School in Enniskillen and been outraged at Wilde's homosexual carryings-on which landed him in prison. The headmaster's two sons also had vocations as clergymen, William Babington Steele and John Haughton Steele. John became chaplain to the Earl of Erne in 1892 and William became curate at Devenish also in 1892. William was rector at the same parish when Anthony Blunt arrived to stay with Peter Montgomery in the 1920s. But by then the Rev John Steele, the much loved 'The Heron' had fled from his post as Chaplain to the Imperial Grand Master of the Orange Order, Lord Erne.

The homosexual scandal flared up again when the dramatist came out of Reading Gaol, for the unmarried Chaplain Steele had to flee Ulster not only because he too had been carrying-on sexually like Wilde, but also because the Protestant Chaplain had got himself received into the Church of Rome, like Wilde. Two more heinous deeds at that time in that place could scarcely be imagined.

On the 7 April 1941 German planes bombed Belfast, returning a week later to kill 745 people in the city, the highest death toll of any British city in a single raid. If only 7,000 turned up in July 1940 when I went to the Erne Valley, after 56,000 homes were badly damaged in the blitz, some 49,000 others were officially evacuated. My stay at the under-gardener's cottage on Sir Edward Archdale's estate came to an end when a stream of evacuees after the Blitz arrived in Fermanagh. I went to join another unattached boy in the loft of Harold Irwin's thatched cottage in the parish of Devenish still presided over by the Rev William Steele.

My stay proved to be short because the gang life of Belfast's backstreets caught up with me. The Queensberry Rules of boxing soon settled my old rival, Tulip, but these rules are recent compared with the ancient boast of boys as to who sports the biggest cock, a game which is the same, so to speak, on the playing fields at Eton as at the Childhaven holiday home in Co Down I remembered. The graffiti of the of the world's public lavatories are written in many languages and the Children of Israel's phallic worship in the wilderness I was to see many years later live on the stage of the Royal Opera House, London, with Peter Montgomery and Anthony Blunt when we went to Peter Hall's famous production of Schoenberg's *Moses and Aaron*.

I wrote of Rector Steele and his boyhood friend Oscar Wilde, 'Destiny drove both to practise what they preached, the man of God condemning, the god of man condemned. The Wilde lad from Dublin held a mirror up to man's nature only to fall as a burning star, his name banished from the roll of honour in Portora's Steele Hall honouring the father of Rector William Babington, that man of God whose gift for music made him master of a living, where he

lived long enough to hound the wild lad from Belfast out of the loft under Legland Mountain into a school ruled by a master, a man of rod, God-fearing feared.' I came to respect the feared Master George Sullivan who presided over Jones Memorial School outside Lisgoole Abbey gates.

George Sullivan had been a student at Trinity College, Dublin, at the time when Anthony Blunt and Peter Montgomery were undergraduates at Trinity College, Cambridge and visiting the Earl of Erne's family at Crom Castle in the summer holidays. Some spy-catching authors assert that Blunt and Montgomery became lovers then, but evidence in print shows that by February 1929, Blunt had become mentally enamoured for the first time with one of Adeline de la Feld's family. In that month's edition of *Venture* magazine Blunt heaped praise on the 'dazzling architectural ensemble' of William Beckford's Fonthill Abbey, calling it 'artistically the best production of the Gothic revival.' By that date Blunt had not yet been invited to see the Gothic revival splendour of the chapel created by Beckford's great-grandson, the Duke of Newcastle, or to see the books and paintings from Fonthill Abbey in Clumber's library.

Blunt went to Paddington in 1921 and in 1983 died there near his father's former parish church of St John, when the American priest, Father Thaddeus Birchard, informed the mourners, 'All have sinned and fallen short of God.' Other authors may well be right in their claims that Blunt had many male lovers, but I, principally as Adeline de la Feld's friend and one of her executors, knew him as the lover of a building, 20 Portman Square. This housed the Courtauld Institute where Blunt first lectured in 1934, becoming its director in 1947.

After the students and staff left at night, the mansion became a pantheon for Blunt who could people it with the statesman and royalty from the past who went there, such as William Gladstone hurrying to report to his patron, the 4th Duke of Newcastle about covering 3,000 miles searching for the duke's daughter-in-law Susan, the granddaughter and heiress of William Beckford. Blunt felt flattered no end when his family's friend Queen Mary turned up to hear his art history lectures. It was almost as if a conspiracy existed between the Russian spy and the dowager Queen, because they both knew perfectly well the homosexual history of Newcastle men going up the white marble staircase at Clumber. Silently, they were aware of William Beckford's escape to the Continent after bugging his schoolboy cousin, and the resemblance that incident bore to Queen Mary's own husband who died with the famous words 'Bugger Bognor' for he, as the King of England, had been obliged to flaunt the authority of his own Attorney General by getting another bugger out of the country.

When the vicar of St John's, Paddington, died in 1929 Queen Mary

wrote to Mrs Blunt, 'What a loss he will be. Why should he have been taken, who was doing such good work on earth, when such useless, evil people are allowed to live.' The Oscar Wilde trouble and the shock waves caused by Chaplain Steele to the Imperial Grand Master, Lord Erne, were not the only gay scandals to alarm Lord Erne's son Arthur and daughter Mabel in Parson Blunt's church, as well as the royal family. One of Louis MacNeice's Oxford friends, who he introduced to Anthony Blunt, was Hugh Lygon, younger son of Earl Beauchamp, and whose mother was a sister of the very rich Bendor, Duke of Westminster. It was Hugh Lygon who introduced Evelyn Waugh to the upper classes at Oxford such as Adeline's nephew, the Earl of Rosse. Waugh later used Lygon as one of the models for Lord Sebastian Flyte, the saintly dipsomaniac in **Brideshead Revisited**.

Lord Beauchamp was the sort of person Mrs Blunt always liked to welcome to St John's Vicarage since he had a link with her past. He had not held high office but was related to the right sort of people. Lady Beauchamp's sister Margaret, daughter of the first Duke of Westminster, became engaged to Queen Mary's brother, Prince Adolphus of Teck, otherwise known as 'Dolly.' Queen Victoria wrote to her daughter, the Empress Frederica of Germany, 'It is a vy good connection... & she will doubtless be well off.'

This royal connection also delighted everyone at St John's Church, Paddington, because Mrs Blunt had known Prince Dolly since the days when she was taught to curtsy on ice when they went skating on the Penn Ponds in Richmond Park in case her father and his pupil Princess May (the future Queen Mary) should pass. They had gone blackberrying together with the future Mrs Blunt under strict instructions to leave the low berries for the short, fat Princess Mary Adelaide to pick. And Paddington could bask in further reflection of royal glory because Anthony Blunt's two friends Gerald and Pud Grosvenor living opposite the church, were the nephews of Prince Dolly who had been created Marquess of Cambridge.

When Bendor, Duke of Westminster, looked around he, at least, was not impressed by the good connections Queen Victoria wrote about. To start with, he hated reference books which stated that his heir presumptive was his cousin Captain Robert Grosvenor of the Queen's Bays who had been dragged up by his parents who played at being gypsies living in a horse-drawn caravan. Bendor's next cousin in line of succession to the richest estate in the kingdom was mad and had to be kept hidden in the country with his pet Aylesbury ducks. After that came the two cousins lurking in Paddington hoping that Bendor would die without a male heir so that they could inherit all the Grosvenor millions.

So the richest man in the kingdom looked around and saw how the enemy prospered. His sister, Lettice Beauchamp, had no less than seven

children, including three sons, yet everybody knew that her husband, Lord Beauchamp, was a great boy-fancier. Bendor's nephew Hugh Lygon, belonged to the Bright Young People many of whom believed that in order to be a genius like Oscar Wilde one had to be a practising male homosexual. These Oxford 'aesthetes,' such as Lord Clonmore, liked to outrage people by giving parties in unusual places such as on the roof of St Peter-in-the-East, while Maurice Bowra went in for the black mass and Brian Howard and Nancy Cunard were publishing what Bendor regarded as filth in Paris.

Bendor might be sonless but he determined to teach his mockers amongst Oxford's aesthetes that he was still a man's man as well as the richest duke. So he began to collect evidence of all the people with whom his brother-in-law Lord Beauchamp associated. Bendor called a spade a spade and a bugger a bugger. Bendor's sister, Lettice, having been happily married to Lord Beauchamp for almost thirty years with a string of seven children as proof of it, simply could not understand what homosexuality was all about and even less her adoring husband's involvement.

Finally, having collected enough evidence and totally ruined his sister's years of happy married life, Bendor asked for and got a warrant for Earl Beauchamp's arrest. It was the Marquess of Queensberry after Oscar Wilde's blood all over again. Because of Prince Dolly's marriage to another of Bendor's sisters, the royal family was too closely involved, so King George V personally warned his fellow Knight of the Garter that a warrant had been issued, whereupon, like William Beckford and others, Lord Beauchamp fled the country. This culmination of events only partially assuaged Bendor's insane hatred. But if Lord Beauchamp could not be handcuffed like Oscar Wilde at least he could be reached by handwriting, 'Dear Bugger-in-law, You got what you deserved. Yours, Westminster.'

If Adeline de Feld did not like the Duke of Westminster she understood why he disliked so many of the Bright Young People around her nephew Michael Rosse. Repeatedly over the years Adeline came back in her letters to me describing Brian Howard as 'the rotten one' responsible for causing so much unhappiness in her family. Confessions of homosexuality did not leave Adeline aghast as they did many people in the 1930s but she lived to regret asking her mother to read Brian Howard's present of the **Bad Companions** book about the Clumber sex scandal. **The Observer** saw Howard as 'the outstandingly disreputable homosexual' at Oxford with Evelyn Waugh and Michael Rosse.

Brian Howard's Oxford coterie kept themselves amused by **Black Bottom** on the ballroom floor and sending copies of **Black Man and White Ladyship** through the post, but at Cambridge amusement was far from the minds of Anthony Blunt and his fellow Apostles as they contemplated the

Red masses in Russia. Soon Brian Howard stopped pulling the strings on puppets such as his old school friends Michael Rosse and Desmond Parsons as he himself, like Blunt, fell under a different kind of magic from that offered by Marice Bowra's black mass at Oxford, the spell cast by the proud Etonian Guy Burgess.

Adeline de la Feld and her friends in the Women's Unions, Sylvia Pankhurst and Mary Macarthur, held the same views about the slums of London's East End as did the Communist Anthony Blunt and his old family friends, Queen Mary and her brother Prince Dolly. Evan Tredegar, because of the extent of his East End holdings and South Wales coalmines, as well as his low deals in high places, was on the receiving end of attacks both from the Left-wing intellectuals in London and from Welsh trade union leaders. Even so close a friend as Seymour Leslie refers to Evan as 'the Playboy Poet' in *The Jerome Connection*, and in the same book tells how Evan had just become a convert to the Church of Rome. Evan told Leslie, 'By good fortune I have with me a potent reliquary, come with me and I will exorcise the poor ghost.'

Evan was always looking for potent reliquaries and he was overjoyed to be called to save some of the ancient skeletons from Lisgoole Abbey thrown into Lough Erne on the orders of Mrs Jones years before. If denied the skull of his look-alike Percy Bysshe Shelley for use as a poet's drinking cup, the Welsh poet Tredegar at least had the consolation of the Lisgoole Abbey bones. Wicked Protestants had unceremoniously thrown the remains of many poets of the ancient kingdom of Oriel into the lough but he, Evan, would honour their skulls by using them as communion cups when communicating with the dead for the comfort of the living who expected more than blood and semen to satisfy their union of man with God. One such cup-skull was specially decorated for that other poet of the extreme Right who liked to sleep in a coffin, Gabrielle D'Annunzio.

Roman society had been taken by surprise when Adeline de la Feld and her Cambridge-educated cousin, Prince Doria, appeared on the scene as 'Filippo and Filippa' preaching Socialism and a new order in the arts. This had not pleased D'Annunzio in Rome and Tredegar in London. Already Adeline was fighting back at Mussolini with her translation of *The Sawdust Caesar* and became very active in the 'Society of Friends of Italian Freedom to expose the Fascisti Atrocities.' Although Communist Nancy Cunard had published Ezra Pound's *Cantos*, the American poet moved with ease to the Palazzo Venezia in Rome where he presented the *Cantos* to Mussolini who found them 'divertente.'

Adeline wrote, 'The Conservatives, under their very mediocre and uninspired Prime Minister Baldwin - whose slogan "Safety First," gave them a false sense of security - none to anyone else - made no firm stand. The first

victim, Ethiopia, with its Emperor, Haile Selassie, was abandoned and sacrificed to the Italian wolves. In the pursuit of an "Impero Romano" to revive the glories of a defunct Roman Empire, the Duce ordered his brave countrymen to attack the defenceless and mostly unarmed Ethiopians. To this noble cause Papa Pio gave not only his consent but also his pontifical blessing for the conversion to his brand of Christianity of the "savage" Ethiopians, regardless of the fact that the Ethiopian Church was at least as ancient as the Roman, and had no record of persecution of other believers or unbelievers. No Inquisition.'

Organised Fascism now dominated Rome's streets. Adeline feared for Filippo Doria. With the wisdom of hindsight she could trace the inevitability of events. In the days of the two young intellectual Socialists 'Filippo and Filippa' Adeline realised she was the activist with her Votes for Women campaign, and this had made many enemies for her cousin. But the new Princess Doria might have been a servant before marriage, as Roman society was quick to recall, but she knew how to look after Mussolini's threats as well as her invalid husband and daughter.

This Scotswoman's indomitable courage emerged publicly during the period when Sylvia Pankhurst and Adeline were writing and campaigning against Italy's unprovoked invasion of Ethiopia. When the League of Nations applied sanctions against Italy because of the war the Pope had blessed, Mussolini organised a supposedly 'voluntary' collection of wedding rings to top up Italy's gold reserve. All Rome's main buildings blazed with flags for the 'ring' celebration which had a double significance, for the Italian word *fede* means both 'faith' and a 'wedding ring'. But Prince Doria put out no flags at the Palazzo Doria for this Fascist faith, and his Scottish princess refused to donate her wedding ring. In revenge, Mussolini ordered his Fascists to march on the palace and break in. The family's name was pulled down from the street.

Even worse things were happening in Germany. The British Consuls-general were sending reports to the Foreign Office about young Nazi thugs forcing Jews to urinate into each other's mouths and if they were sick making them wipe up the vomit with their own hair. Vienna had been a sad city for Adeline after the First World War, still suffering from the overthrow of the Hapsburgs. Since her first visit to St Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, Adeline regularly kept in touch with the Orthodox Church in London and the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius to which she belonged. But Adeline did not care for Archdeacon Sharp of the Anglican Foreign Relations Council who found homosexual delight in Vienna with Guy Burgess and Captain Macnamara. At a personal level she felt bitter that Prince Danylo Skoropadsky had allowed himself to be feted by the Free Ukraine movement, not because

many of its members were homosexuals but Fascists of the worst kind.

Adeline was most anxious that her nephew Desmond Parsons should keep away from Francis Rose and Guy Burgess who took parties in the name of the Anglo-German Fellowship and Free Ukraine to enjoy the fleshpots of Berlin and Vienna. She wrote, 'From the first I gave him my special affection. Less considered than his elder brother, I felt he needed my protection. Even in his Eton days if and when he complained of stomach aches he was ridiculed and told to eat less sweets. It seemed he was constantly the object of ridicule. Philosophically accepting the fact that he was unlucky, he felt frustrated and unfairly treated when, on the false and ridiculous accusation that he was weak of character and sure to make bad friends, he was not allowed to go to Oxford. Finally, making his own decision, he took himself off as far as possible from his family by escape to China, remarking that since I had learnt Russian and translated from that language, he intended to learn Chinese with the same purpose in mind. And this in fact he did.'

Harold Acton lived in Peking at this time researching Chinese classical theatre and it made Adeline happy to think that when Desmond Parsons travelled to China he would meet up with this longstanding friend of so many in her family. However, anger followed happiness when she learnt that Francis Rose had also gone to China afterwards writing of Acton as 'my best friend in Peking.' After the murder of his lover Ernst in the Röhm Putsch, Francis Rose had felt the need for a change of scene and while angry that the changed scene was Peking, Adeline was not alone in thinking that London could do without Sir Francis for a long time. In 1961, after many years of reflection, Rose wrote, 'There is no question that Gabrielle D'Annunzio was one of the greatest influences of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. He was virtually, if one excludes Lenin, the first dictator. Mussolini could never have succeeded without D'Annunzio, who was, after all, the prototype of all modern dictators.'

Adeline did not disagree with Rose's view that D'Annunzio was the brain behind Mussolini. She felt sharply the contrast of attitudes between Francis Rose and Filippo Doria. Notwithstanding Ernst Röhm's murder, Rose kept up with the powerful figures surrounding Hitler and Mussolini. A war was coming and Adeline held starkly different views on the basic question of Fascism from those of Francis Rose and Evan Tredegar, and the famous poets whose voices were heard screaming hysterically along with Hitler's about the world's ills stemming from the world's wealth being concentrated in the hands of rich Jews. T S Eliot had written;

The rats are underneath the piles

The jew is underneath the lot.

It was Desmond Parsons's journey to China that brought matters to an

end for Adeline who wrote, 'But, from a tragic fate and destiny, there is no escape. Relentlessly pursued, the victim is brought back from Peking suffering from what was described as an obscure disease that could only be treated, so they averred, in Europe. Declared incurable, the medicos, nonetheless, subjected the victim to experimental treatment consisting of slow poisoning to death and for which they charged the most exorbitant fees. Flown out to Switzerland for a final dose of poison, I never saw him again alive and retain the thought of him as a flaming spirit flying into space escaping from this earth so cruel to him, beautiful, beloved Desmond. A stranger in another world I would leave the old to start a new life and try to make it a better one. No image of me would exist in anyone's mind. I would create the image, free of all constraint to fit into someone's idea of me. Leave the Past and all its tragic memories, frustrations, mistakes, lost hopes, and a future holding no prospect but a continuation of the state of captivity. As a start Canada, across the Rockies to the far west coast. Later, perhaps New Zealand.'

On 8 September 1987 Sir Harold Acton wrote to me, 'Desmond Parsons was indeed a close friend of mine whom I saw frequently in Peking, but he made his ill-starred journey into the interior without letting me know. He just vanished with his servant into the interior without procuring the necessary documents and the Chinese provincial officials always wary of "foreign devils" suspected him of being a secret agent. Our embassy had not been advised and did little to help. However he returned safely, though somewhat jaded. He had a romantically adventurous spirit and thought he could emulate Peter Fleming. I fear his illness might have been the result of that expedition. I have not read his account of it, but should be glad to edit it in due course as you suggest.'

Francis Rose was never an intimate friend, but he was a protege of Gertrude Stein and he came to me for advice and financial assistance when in difficulties. Mme Wellington Koo had lent him her charming house in Peking where he took to smoking opium with a sinister American. I cannot visualise Prince Doria in Rose's company! What Adeline did not wish to visualise was other members of her family being in Rose's company. Yet all too soon he reappeared in London, and once again not only wined and dined with Adeline's family but sought 'advice and financial assistance' from them as well as posing with Adeline's niece, Bridget Parsons, for photographs in Cecil Beaton's spoof book *My Royal Past*.

In 1937 Lord and Lady Rodney went to London from their Canadian farm to attend the coronation of King George VI and at Waterloo Station on their return to catch a ship at Southampton they got into the compartment where a woman sat reading in the corner. She seemed to resent their intrusion. But Marjorie Rodney kept staring in half-recognition until at last both women

realised that they had last met in the Red Cross office in Boulogne twenty years earlier. The reader was Adeline de la Feld who broke into a cold sweat. She was escaping England and all damn Family Places and by the strangest of coincidences was bound for Canada, the first stage of her journey, on the same boat as the Rodneys. She wrote, 'We may live in the Past in a kind of miasma like poor Bridget Parsons, or get up and leave it behind. Could I sit among the tombstones and the ruins, like the Arabs in Fez, and creep about mourning the Past?'

But in the Rodneys' minds happy memories existed about the past they had shared with Adeline. By the time the boat docked in Canada Adeline had heard so much about the Ukrainian settlements all around the Rodneys' farm that she decided to break her journey at Edmonton and see it all for herself. From the train windows on the way to Southampton, Adeline saw fluttering in every town and village the street decorations and bunting from King George's recent coronation. But on arriving in Edmonton Adeline found parts of the city and all the Ukrainian villages ablaze with the traditional national costumes and banners that she had known so well in the summers of long ago she spent with Vera Demidoff and her family. The portrait of a handsome young man appeared everywhere and an excited Adeline read, 'His Highness Hetmanych Danylo Skoropadsky.' This was the young boy she had taken, with his brother Peter, on long drives through the steppes of the Ukraine, and now here he was on an extensive tour of the United States and Canada, visiting the many communities which still regarded him as their 'Hetmanych', since his father Prince Paul who had been proclaimed Hetman by the Germans in 1918 still lived under Hitler's protection at Wannsee in Berlin.

This further strange coincidence, like her meeting with the Rodneys on the boat-train, led Adeline to think that something more than coincidence had brought these events together. The appearance of Hetmanych Danylo in such a jubilant mood out on the Canadian Prairies convinced Adeline that she had a destiny in Alberta. So she stopped on, not for weeks or months but for years. It was not, as she had thought, merely a break in her journey of escape, but her journey's end.

Everywhere Danylo Skoropadsky went the press went too, from the **New York Sun** to the **Edmonton Journal**. Many civic and religious receptions took place in Winnipeg covered by twenty news-stories each of which had to be translated from English into Ukrainian as material in a new book **For the Ukraine**. Hundreds of photographs showed Hetmanych Danylo with bishops, the Governor General, Lord and Lady Rodney, and with Kiev, the aeroplane he used on the tour. But none of the press stories took Adeline back to her happy days before the First World War more than did the history of the Skoropadsky family at their Trostianets estate when little Peter

had been crippled rescuing the blackbird.

For the Ukraine was the first book Adeline had connection with in her new homeland of Canada, and she looked forward excitedly to reading it in Ukrainian, but the book's illustrations frightened her. The book prominently displayed a picture with the caption 'Hetman's residence at Wannsee, Berlin', an address well-known to Guy Burgess and Captain Macnamara MP and others of the Anglo-German Fellowship and Free Ukraine campaign. Herr Hitler had promised to Danylo Skoropadsky what he had promised the Austrian arch-dukes and Prince Carlos de Rohan, namely, the restoration of various monarchies.

It had been embarrassing for Adeline's family when Maundy Gregory took his honours-for-sale and the Free Ukraine campaign and his long association with homosexual blackmailers to the Hopes' former seat at the Deepdene. After Maundy Gregory disappeared, Sir Edward Marsh became a leading light in Free Ukraine politics. For many years the homosexual Eddie Marsh was private secretary and literary adviser to Winston Churchill whose shadow and later Minister of Information, Brendan Bracken, had been Evan Tredegar's protege. Evan had been at Eton with Churchill's cousin Lord Rodney, and although George Rodney successfully got away from Evan's set by going to live in Canada, they both kept up their Free Ukraine interests.

Adeline ardently wanted her nephew Desmond Parsons similarly to escape the influence of Francis Rose's and Ernst Röhm's fashionable homosexual network in Berlin where the Ukraine Hetman family, the Skoropadskys, also lived much admired by Hitler's Youth Movement. But above all, Adeline had wanted Desmond to get away from London dominated by Evan Tredegar's and Cecil Beaton's high camp school. It dismayed Adeline to discover that Francis Rose had a similar school in Peking.

Now in 1937 Canada a more terrifying aspect of the Free Ukraine campaign could be seen as Adeline leafed through the book **For the Ukraine**. Page after page showed exiled Ukrainians in jack-boots and Nazi-style uniforms with Prince Danylo in the middle. Adeline had as little time for Kaiser Wilhelm II at her Uncle Doria's home in Rome as she did for the Kaiser's uncle King Edward VII at her Uncle Newcastle's home at Clumber. She had recognised Paul Skoropadsky then as the Kaiser's puppet and was not surprised when the peasants were urged to violent unrest by Petlyura who overthrew Skoropadsky and set himself up as dictator of the Ukraine.

Opportunisticly, in 1920 the British saw a chance in all this, of scheming to bring the Soviet regime down, as Anthony West points out in **H G Wells**, where he identifies Winston Churchill and many MPs who saw the situation as 'a burning issue...that the Polish move into the Ukraine to give armed assistance to the Ukrainian Separatists under Petlyura.' Here, as on so

many occasions, Moura Budberg was better placed to spy on Simon Petlyura than her lover H G Wells. It was only in 1921 that the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet signed a treaty with the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic. Over the years Adeline had discussed the problem of the Skoropadsky family with their fellow Ukrainian Baroness Moura Budberg.

Adeline was very fond of Danylo Skoropadsky and although she watched him being photographed with uniformed Ukrainian soldiers of the United Hetman Organization in many North American towns and cities, she impressed upon him the folly of leading the pro-German Ukrainians against the Russians should Hitler declare war. When that war came in September 1939 many Ukrainians marched with the Nazis against the Russians and wrought wholesale slaughter on the Poles.

Adeline seems to have got her ideas through to Danylo Skoropadsky, because six weeks before the 3 September 1939 deadline, Danylo fled to England, where he ended up working as an aircraft designer, the sole foreigner in the factory. The fact that his father, the Hetman set up by the Kaiser, remained in Berlin under Hitler's wing could not possibly implicate Danylo, who played no part in the fate of the army of 'innocent' Cossacks who were returned to Stalin's death squads in May 1945. Because the Skoropadsky family had been central figures in the Ukraine's fate during the Revolution, naturally the Soviet spies, including Guy Burgess and Anthony Blunt, kept themselves informed about happenings in the Hetman's residence, Wannsee in Berlin, and later as Danylo went to evening meals with that other Ukrainian favourite, Catherine Devilliers who shared the Bloomsbury flat with Dil de Rohan of the Ministry of Information. Many of the Minister's old friends had been members of the Free Ukraine campaign, as had Brendan Bracken himself.

After Oscar Wilde was arrested in 1895 much behind-the-scenes bargaining went on to keep out of court the fact that the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) had intervened in a fight in Hamburg between Foreign Secretary Lord Rosebery and the Marquis of Queensberry armed with a horse-whip who, in addition to his son Bosie, who was Wilde's lover, had another son who Queensberry thought was Rosebery's lover. In 1933 the High Court was similarly rigged to stop Prince Paul Skoropadsky revealing that the money missing from the Anglo-Ukrainian Fellowship had not gone to the plaintiff, Louis Tufnell, agent to Maundy Gregory, but to Gregory himself who used the missing sums to pay homosexual associates who blackmailed him. Who had who among the rich Tories and Liberals backing the Anglo-Ukrainian Fellowship was not unknown to Anthony Blunt who had studied more than the architectural splendour of Adeline de la Feld's family homes.

Secret Society

The trusty Christy Graham, land steward of Lisgoole Abbey outlived the unfortunate Obins Jones by fifty-five years. I arrived only eight years after the blind Christy lay dying on the feather tick in the downstairs room off the Granshagh farm kitchen where, in 1941, I took my own candle after the last fireside story had been told by James Graham, the land steward's son born at Lisgoole on 18 September 1882. James was unmarried and looked after by his spinster sister Lizzie. The Grahams' childhood in the abbey woods and the strange death of Obins Jones after the ancient Lisgoole cemetery was converted into a rose garden seemed presently more real to me than the vixen James and I skinned at dawn while tending our traps. Even the memory of my own Belfast want and waiting for the free Christmas roast from Canon Maguire's poor box seemed faraway as I listened to other days when the fever was worse than the Potato Famine of 1847 and the contagious were fed by long sticks and the boy Christy Graham carried turnip soup to the bush-school by Lisgoole Abbey gates. Grass became the dying sacrament in the green mouths of Protestants and Catholics and the gaunt spectre of families fallen by the Indian Meal Road to the delight of scavenging crow for there was not always time to bury Protestants straight in their coffins or coffinless Catholics with arms crossed.

The divided community was further split when Mrs Isabella Diana Jones showed that not even Catholic kings and bishops could rest in consecrated ground. For thirty years my life would be greatly influenced by Granshagh farm and the political situation of the neighbourhood. In *Songs out of Oriel* I wrote of a neighbouring farmer;

**Tailcoat Johnny Price crooked as an eel hook
though his ancestors, Trooper Willie and Nehemiah
established the first Methodist preaching.**

Not only the Methodist Preaching House at Mullaghy gave our leisure hours a focal point, because a long-established custom of farmhouse services drew us to nearby Tubmans of Clonbunniagh or to the Dowlers at Parsons Grove where I would one day make my own debut as a Fermanagh preacher. One of the first authors to depict this religious scene had been the Methodist founder himself, John Wesley, who wrote in 1762 of Enniskillen, 'the inhabitants glory they have no papists in the town.' By 1769 Wesley, preaching again in the town, noted, 'now at least five papists to one protestant.'

The Price family of my acquaintance took great pride in the founding

of the first Methodist Preaching House by their ancestors Trooper Willie and Nehemiah. At Mullaghy's corrugated iron building we did not see 'Tailcoat Johnny Price crooked as an eel hook' for apart from being bent with age, he lived with a guilty conscience, or at least Lizzie and James Graham hoped he had a guilty conscience. Before the First World War Johnny Price bought one of the tall houses in Enniskillen and insured it well. After a time he set it on fire and collected the insurance, but left the charred remains of a young Catholic maid, whose family and friends did not forget the wicked arsonist who escaped punishment. In order to ingratiate himself with the authorities Johnny Price, dressed in a silk top hat and with a Union Jack around his middle stood up in Enniskillen Fair offering a pound of his ill-gotten gains to every young boy standing for Spring Hireling who would take the King's Shilling and join the British Army. Johnny only had a daughter to succeed him at the family farm on the Granshagh Road, but in 1927 a young relation, Alan Price, surfeited with philandering as a British trooper got released and married his cousin and her well-stocked farm.

While in the army, Alan Price had met another Irishman with interest in local land, Peter Murphy. In his biography of Lady Edwina Mountbatten, Richard Hough states, 'Peter Murphy was one of the Mountbatten "stayers", the longest stayer of them all. He was an *éminence grise* in the Mountbatten household for many years...When both Mountbattens were at home he formed with them a *ménage à trois*. 'Edwina Mountbatten's sister Lady Delamere, goes further and in an affectionate memoir of Murphy says, 'He was in the Guards and then he was at Cambridge with Dickie. They became great pals. He was no bone of contention in the family because he was a homosexual. It was good for them to have somebody like that around who was pleasant, most intelligent and sang for his supper in the sense that he got his food and drink and was comfortable and all that.'

Amongst other estates, Edwina Mountbatten inherited Classiebawn Castle in Sligo by Mullaghmore harbour where one day Lord Mountbatten, a sixteen year old Portora boy and friends would be blown up by the IRA. As a boy, my way home with James Graham from Enniskillen Fair not only lay along the Sligo Road, but the passing trains that held travellers up at Mullaghy Level Crossing belonged to the Sligo, Leitrim and Northern Counties Railway. After leaving the army, Peter Murphy and Alan Price looked for more than Portora schoolboys to lure to their beds. Between Classiebawn Castle and Alan Price's farm lay the Border town of Belcoo which another army officer wanted to develop.

A local politician who knew him when Alan Price came out of the army and who later had to sue him over business matters, is George Cathcart who told me in 1989, 'He had the two of the richest men in County Fermanagh,

Major Nixon of Belcoo and J M Carson who owned the quarry and they decided to build a few houses about Belcoo. To that end they put them up for tender and Alan Price put in the lowest tender so he got the job for five or six houses. He was capable of building houses, for he had good hands on him. He went into Enniskillen to Lennons' Builders Suppliers and when the houses were completed, the people he was building them for, Nixon and Carson, paid him his money, but he didn't pay for all the material he got, so they took action against him in the courts but they couldn't take a penny off him because the wife owned the farm and he had only the breeches he stood up in. They lost thousands and thousands of pounds over him in one way or another.'

If Major Nixon lost a large sum of money over Alan Price, the farmer-builder did not lose a chance of taking his revenge for having his name held up to ridicule in the press. Major Nixon lived in considerable style at his residence at Belcoo and used the estate surrounding the ruins of Nixon Hall for outwintering stock. From both sides of the Border, the major brought his grand guests for annual shooting parties which included guests at the Mountbattens' Classiebawn Castle. In addition to Nixon Hall estate, the major had the shooting rights on the Grahams' and other local farms. When James Graham told me that Major Nixon, one of the richest men in the county, seldom remembered to pay James the one pound a year for the shooting rights, I revelled in the knowledge that Alan Price had robbed him of so many thousands of pounds over the Belcoo houses. Together Alan and I set out to ensure that the best of woodcock and pheasants went into our own pots before the coveys rose at the approach of the 'Big House Captains.' With instincts of restitution aroused by Major Nixon's meanness to someone as poor and honest as James Graham, I became a natural poacher, regarding him as an 'Unchristianed Get' like Mrs Jones of Lisgoole Abbey before him. I felt free to fish the lake and poach its tufted duck and ring plover.

Many poachers, both Catholics and Protestants, came before Major Dickie at Letterbreen Petty Sessions, but Alan Price and I were never caught. A member of the Dickie family was serving in India in 1945 and Richard Hough writes of Edwina Mountbatten, 'Her ADC for the day is Lieutenant A.W.M. Dickie, who was brought up in Enniskillen and knows Classiebawn and Mullaghmore. That is a good start.' Both the Mountbattens loved their Irish estate and a 'good start' could always be made by talking about Classiebawn. With people like Peter Murphy and Alan Price around, the tragic explosion in Mullaghmore waters saddened me but did not surprise me, nor did the similar death near the Grahams' farm at Granshagh of Alan Price's son Allie.

I did not take so readily to Alan Price's other illegal activities, centred around sex, as I did to the justifiable poaching. Although Ulster had no

conscription into the forces during the war, so many farmers and their labourers took the King's Shilling that farms welcomed travellers who came across the Border on the Sligo, Leitrim Railway without work permits to work for low pay with 'no waste of good spittle licking insurance stamps.' One such serving-boy, Tom McGowan, left Manorhamilton to plough at Clonbunniagh as Willie Tubman had gone into the army. Tom brought the Tubmans' ancient horses over to do the acreage required of our farm by the wartime Tillage Act.

Tom McGowan was a good ploughman and much sought after for his charm that could lead a child to welling water for the mumps. The much loved rebel Tom McGowan often found himself sent back across the Border by the police for not having a work permit or getting drunk and disturbing the peace of Enniskillen Fair by singing Republican songs. What pleasure Tom gave us coming in, drunk or sober, to Granshagh's fireside, but Alan Price refused to enter our farm kitchen if he heard Tom's loud voice. This arose not simply because the ex-British Army Alan resented Tom's Nationalist views but from the fact that Tom in turn resented Alan's sexual behaviour. Alan appeared to enjoy revenge as much or more than the sex act itself for he lost no time cycling up to Florencecourt Police Station to report Tom ploughing or digging potatoes without a work permit.

In *Song of Erne* I wrote, 'The evenings when Lizzie was in charge of the big copper tea urn and the mountain of cakes, were not much fun for me, for I had to sit out in the little shed on guard. This was essential, for at a former dance some wag had gone unobserved into the shed and emptied certain powders into the urn. Before the dance finished everyone was rushing out in search of an unoccupied place in the hedge.' We all knew the 'wag' to be Alan Price but as he was alive when I wrote the book he could not be named.

Being a Roman Catholic, Tom McGowan was not allowed to attend the dances at Granshagh Orange Hall though this did not stop him from knowing the Orange Lodge's secrets. The Lodge had grown so big by 1930 that it had moved out of the Grahams' house to a corrugated iron hall at the end of the farm lane and the key lived on Lizzie's dresser along with the best willow-pattern china, half-used seed packets and the cuckoo clock. Because of his closeness to the hall rather than from any closeness to Orange Order beliefs, James held office for over sixty years at the local Lodge. And he could, unlike many, read and write.

Most papers to do with the Orange Lodge business were kept in the long drawer of the kitchen table which until 1892 had been Mrs Jones's dressing table at Lisgoole Abbey. Letters which I had to clear from this drawer years later showed that there had been local problems in the past. A family called Moreton figured in these. Willie Moreton wrote to James on 5 April 1926, 'Sir, I am replying to yours of 30 inst in which you state you have

been instructed by Fred Montgomery to write to me as re charge he has to make against me. I shall hold same or any other person responsible for any false charge they may bring against me and I will take proceedings against them personally for Slander or Blackmail, Defination of Character or False accusation as I think as much of my character as any one in your Lodge. I remain without further Notice, W Moreton.'

Shortly before I arrived at Granshagh Willie Moreton, herdsman and ferryman of Cleenish Island had been sent to prison for begetting a child by his very young daughter. George Cathcart adds, 'It was during the war and the local sergeant at Florencecourt police station advised him that his only plea was that it was in the black-out.' Some months later Alan proudly introduced me to the released Willie Moreton at the parish church, for although Alan attended the Methodist Preaching House on Sunday afternoon, he joined the cyclists pedalling up to Rector Kingston's Church of Ireland morning service. This was the great occasion of the week, much more than Enniskillen Fair, for showing off best clothes, and Alan knew what a striking figure he made.

I shared my two-seater desk at Jones Memorial School with Alan's eldest daughter Jinny, and I often walked home with his elder son Allie who for many years, until his murder, would be our postman. War rationing had become extremely acute including paper, and I dearly wanted a scrapbook. One day while walking home from school with young Allie Price, he told me his father had got me one and that I should go up to the house to *ceili* after evening milking. Now a widower with the farm deeds in his sole name, Alan sent his arsonist father-in-law Tailcoat Johnny into the workhouse to die, farmed the land and became an expert at the sewing machine, as anxious for me to be measured for new trousers as for his daughters to be seen at school with beautifully-made dresses.

I sat in the farm kitchen talking with the Price boys and girls while Alan's sewing machine could be heard up in 'The Room', formerly their parlour but now Alan's bedroom and tailor shop. Obviously an important rush-job was on for the Hon Cecil Lowry-Corry's much-mended plus-fours or for the colonel's lady down at the army camp needing curtains because Alan had great flair constantly in demand.

At last Allie took me up to The Room and left me alone with his father. Boys in Fermanagh's village shcools had played the game of who-has-the-biggest-cock long before the hordes of Belfast evacuees descended with their bragging. I was therefore not completely surprised when Alan started to unbutton his trousers and flash me with, 'Have you seen a better job than that? Once the pride of the British Army!' When the flasher made it plain he wanted to bugger me, I became alarmed, for quite apart from having loathed anal penetration from enforced enemas as a child, The Room's door was not

locked. My embarrassment deepened when Allie came in again with two bowls of rice pudding which he placed by the bed without batting an eyelid at his father's nudity.

My reluctance to do Alan's bidding emerged as a relatively mild frustration for him which never came to public attention like his next pass. Apart from building houses, sewing pinafores, milking cows and lending his impressive Sunday-attired presence at the Methodist Preaching House, Alan had numerous other enterprises in hand. One of Willie Tubman's horses fell into the river and though saved from drowning we could all see the once-sturdy legs would never again carry its great weight. And then, on a Sunday evening after the Methodist Preaching House had been locked up for another week, Alan Price appeared with an attractive young ploughboy who had the latest in tractors and who would do all the local ploughing.

All went well until the ploughboy started courting a farmer's daughter. Everyone was delighted, except Alan Price, when this well-matched couple married. Alan's jealousy drove him to make midnight raids on his ex-friend's new home which had a heavy thatched roof which could so easily have been set on fire like the Enniskillen house burnt down by Alan's father-in-law, Johnny Price. Alan started his long campaign of revenge by throwing stones onto the farm's cattle shed which had an iron roof and the noise terrified the cows and made them choke on their chains. We all expected Alan to go before a higher court than Major Dickie's Petty Sessions when it seemed Alan had lost his sanity. The threatened farmer was a most respected local politician and in the Orange Order closely involved with Cecil Lowry-Corry. But country people felt reluctant to report neighbours' misdeeds, and particularly not sexual ones since Willie Moreton was not the sole person in our midst to enjoy incest with his children. George Cathcart had been through the law courts with Alan and in 1989 recalled the case well, dismissing Alan as 'a real villain.'

Alan had friends in the all-important 'Big House Establishment' even more intimate and influential than the gay Peter Murphy of the Mountbatten *ménage a trois*. Those of our neighbourhood's misdemeanors which got as far as police ears had to be reported to Florencecourt Police Station hard by the gates of stately Florencecourt Castle, home of the Earl of Enniskillen, leader of the Orange Order. Lord Enniskillen, with his son and heir Viscount Cole and with Cecil Lowry-Corry, led the 12 July Orangemen's parade through Enniskillen along with a robust matron called Mrs Lily Irwin. When my book **Tattoo Lily: and Other Ulster Stories** appeared in 1961, all the locals instantly knew that Tattoo Lily of the title story was none other than Mrs Irwin of Spa Well, who could down her whisky as fast as Lord Enniskillen.

One night at Granshagh after Alan Price sought to break up the marriage of the former ploughboy, Mrs Irwin sprang to the absent Alan's defence with 'I don't give a damn what Alan does with his courting tackle, or how many thousands of pounds he lifted off Major Nixon, for Alan is the only man in the county able to handle poor Lord Cole in or out of the fits.' When the hoary voice of Mrs Irwin spoke we all sat up and listened. She had power, Orange power. Although Viscount Cole lived in a magnificent castle often described as 'the most beautiful house in Ireland,' and was heir to its many acres, we all thought of him as poor not only because of his epilepsy, but also because he reputedly got cruel treatment from his stepmother.

Michael Cole went to as many Orange dances and concerts as possible to play his accordion and get away from his stepmother who would live to see the Florencecourt heir die in 1956 unmarried aged 34. Lady Enniskillen knew perfectly well why her stepson did not marry and felt nothing but relief when he left to join the Irish Guards with his fellow-bachelor Lord Plunket. If Queen Elizabeth II, her mother and sister Princess Margaret would gather in Windsor Forest one day to unveil their personal memorial to Lord Plunket, there would be no such memorial for Pat Plunket's friend and fellow-member of the Royal Household, Sir Anthony Blunt.

John Costello, author of **Mask of Treachery**, is rather misleading when citing me as giving him information that 'Blunt's iron constitution flagged in 1942. Mental exhaustion and physical illness forced him to retreat on medical leave to the Northern Ireland home of his Cambridge friend Peter Montgomery.' For over thirty years the Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, Professor Sir Anthony Blunt, would live with my Belfast friend, John Gaskin, a former Irish Guardsman. But Gaskin only met Blunt in 1951 and he was a Prisoner-of-War in 1942 when Blunt came to Enniskillen.

From the 1920s Blunt formed friendships with Ulster families such as the MacNeices, Lord Erne's, the Montgomerys of Blessingbourne, the Dukes of Abercorn, the Earls of Belmore and others related by blood or homosexuality. But the art historian also had connections with many non-Big House men as well as John Gaskin. Blunt had enjoyed more than Orange Hall dances with Alan Price and knew how dangerous a person Alan could be in undertaking the wealthy Major Nixon in the law courts. But Alan took on the Establishment because he knew the Establishment could be blackmailed. Too many young boys had been given bicycles and football boots by the Hon Cecil Lowry-Corry, and Lord Cole had played on things besides his accordion at local dance halls which had no lavatories except in the turf-bog where a roll in the heather did nobody any harm. Blunt could be described as MI5's specialist on Ulster and he was an Englishman trusted by such Unionist stalwarts as Sir Basil Brooke who, in addition to being Prime Minister, had been a founder

of the B Specials so hated by the Roman Catholics.

Blunt was quick to see why the Protestant-Unionist MP in Fermanagh, Sir Basil Brooke wanted our local Catholic-Nationalist MP, Cahir Healy, locked up in Brixton Prison under the Defence of the Realm Act. This Nationalist politician had sympathy with Hitler and the Blueshirts as well as Oswald Mosley who was arrested on the same day on Churchill's orders. The Blueshirts were very active even going from Ireland to fight for Franco in the Spanish Civil War. But Cahir Healy also knew too much about Establishment cover-ups and especially those concerned with the Irish gay scene figuring his opposite numbers the Hon Cecil Lowry-Corry and Viscount Cole. During the 1960s Cahir Healy would write much in the *Irish News* about my wartime experiences in Fermanagh.

Anthony Blunt was not the only clever young man from Cambridge to stay at Blessingbourne with Captain Peter Montgomery and to drive over to the next estate for dinner with Sir Basil Brooke. Alan Price seldom finished a sentence without using the phrase, 'There now you know there.' When soldiers at the local camps asked Alan's superior opinion about Prime Minister Brooke, Alan would say, 'Sir Basil's a great man, there now you know there. But do you know what he did? Went and married an English-woman, there now you know there.' The local landscape contained other English people besides Lady Brooke and Anthony Blunt.

Sir Basil had an English secretary in parliament described by Alan as 'Alfred Arnold, Old One Ball, a famous composer and Sir Basil's right-hand man, there now you know there.' Apart from being a civil servant, Alfred Arnold did much work for the theatre in Ulster and chaired the BBC programme 'The Arts in Ulster' which reviewed *Ulster* in which I wrote, 'Alfred Arnold, the English civil servant who fell in love with Ulster was always there, looking among theatrical people for likely talent for his new musical play.'

Before I sent off *Ulster* to Faber who commissioned it with help from the Ulster Office, both Peter Montgomery and Anthony Blunt read all passages about mutual friends. On 9 September 1963, Peter wrote from Blessingbourne, 'You ask about Alfred's *Vanity Fair*. I didn't see the London production (I hate musicals except *West Side Story*) but I expect Alfred's had better stuff in it though naturally the London performances would have more polish than the production here which was nonetheless pretty slick notwithstanding an amateur cast.'

Theatre people on both sides of the Border knew Alfred Arnold's musical gifts, just as several generations had looked at newspaper photographs of Tibby Lecky-Browne-Lecky dressed for his favourite role as Lady Windermere. Alfred was a much-loved character and since he came from

England, and felt as much at home in Dublin and Belfast, both sides in the religious divide trusted him. Many people knew him to be not too discreet about his homosexuality and the fact that he only had one testicle. But Anthony Blunt had reason to fear Alfred Arnold whose career and other activities in Belfast were brought to an end by a plot hatched at Blunt's flat in the Courtauld Institute. But in 1942, long before the 1966 plot, Blunt needed Alfred's support, because the political situation had changed dramatically.

The blitz on Belfast drove many people to sleep in the open out at Hannahstown so that Tom Henderson, an Independent Unionist MP, attacked the Stormont Government with, 'The Catholics and Protestants are going up there mixed and they are talking to one another. They are sleeping in the same sheugh, below the same tree or in the same barn. They all say the same thing, that the government is no good.'

Such a well-known Orangeman as Sir Basil Brooke certainly did not regard it as good to let Catholics and Protestants talk and sleep together, which might lead to such things as mixed marriages and people uniting against the Big House elite and wanting Labour MPs. Basil Brooke had become Minister of Commerce in 1941 and with his English wife and Alfred Arnold soon transformed his ministry into an extension of Westminster, bypassing Stormont. It became such a power base that during the unrest of 1943 Brooke was made Prime Minister which he remained for the next twenty years, always ready to listen to his trusty friend and secretary, Alfred Arnold.

The blitz on Belfast and other towns in the North showed Basil Brooke a weakness in the Stormont government's position since it was obliged to call in the despised de Valera's fire services from the South. However, notwithstanding his gratitude for these fire engines, Prime Minister Brooke could hardly ignore Unionist demands that a stop be put to the illegal immigration of people who crossed the Border and took jobs away from Protestants. Tom McGowan was an example but Sir Basil could rely on people such as Alan Price to inform Florencecourt Police Station of such heinous crimes, although Alan's disappointment and jealousy after the ploughboy married led him to commit crimes that would never had entered poor Tom McGowan's head. Sir Basil would call not one, but two of his racehorses after my book *Song of Erne* since he knew James and Lizzie Graham and had visited their farm when its parlour was the local Orange Lodge. For years Brooke would greet characters from my book with 'How's Grahams' cub getting along' until the day came when questions about my wartime relationship with Alfred Arnold and Major Anthony Blunt became politically embarrassing.

Alan Price's neighbour, George Carson of Rosscairn, was a bachelor

for whom Lizzie Graham tirelessly sought a wife. But if George approached Lizzie's house and heard unknown female voices inside, an invariable indication that Lizzie had a prospective wife there, he and Alan Price would steal away without going in. George owned a splendid bull that did service to most of the neighbourhood, but because many of the cottages were owned by women they often asked me to take their sole cow for bulling at Rosscairn since on the one hand I was perfectly capable of keeping the beasts from straying down other lanes, while on the other the accepted conventions of female propriety prevented them from being present at the actual mating. Nevertheless, the women always warned me not to hand over the service fee until there was 'a good second jump just to be sure,' since with only one cow the family depended on the animal for both milk and butter in wartime rationing.

Nobody got more excitement from the mating of cows as well as horses than George Carson and Alan Price. It gave them a thrill. But after the ploughboy went off and married the joy went out of both their lives. George inherited the Rosscairn farm from a maiden aunt who prided herself on her equipage which, of course, was nothing nearly so grand as Lord Belmore's horse carriage complete with coachman on the dickie. But Carson's mare was bigger and faster and George and Alan sat in the elegant tub-trap driving the mare at speeds which one day would result in an accident. But before then a greater calamity befell the substantial house on Rosscairn Hill with its immensely thick walls and extensive thatched roof.

George Carson and Alan Price quarrelled over police enquiries into midnight raids on the farm where the ploughboy now lived with his young wife. Lizzie Graham and I both felt apprehensive as the two squabbling men drove off in the tub-trap for what proved to be the last time. Next day on my way home from school I saw Carson's beautiful farmhouse had been burnt to the ground. Shortly afterwards the depressed George threw himself into the lake but was saved and certified and sent to the asylum at Omagh.

In *Song of Erne* I wrote, 'First the farmer with the burnt house went...Of the twenty or so houses in our townland, at least half had an inmate at Omagh. And with ironic justice the epidemic not only touched Catholics and the more superstitious of the Protestants, but our "saved" neighbours too. In repugnant self-confidence they generally regarded themselves as proof against evils which beset unsaved mankind. Lacking tolerance and common sympathy, they were never surprised or sorry when a Catholic was taken down to Omagh. Being half-way to the devil, in their view, it was not to be wondered that he came to claim his own. And over insane Protestants they shrugged their shoulders declaring it must be a punishment.'

On publication of the book in 1960 Alan Buchanan, Bishop of Clogher,

came to Cleenish Parish Church, where many of the book's characters were in the congregation and took a copy of *Song of Erne* into the pulpit. Afterwards he found his way up the long lane at Granshagh to talk to Lizzie and James Graham, the heroes of the book, but because it was snowing the bishop had a scarf which hid his clerical collar so that when he announced himself as the bishop Lizzie started laughing thinking I had got one of my theatrical friends to play a joke on her.

Bishop Buchanan's home was called Thornfield, formerly the dowager house on the Montgomery estate at Blessingbourne. A few days later, Alan Buchanan got a letter from someone who heard his sermon at Cleenish and asked about the accuracy of what I had written about local people being committed to the Omagh asylum during the war. The bishop took the letter up to Peter Montgomery who promised to look into the matter since he knew Alan Price and his wartime problems. The asylum records showed I had been right about the 1942 certification, but sadly many years of Peter's own life would be spent behind Omagh's asylum walls when the strain of life became too much. The person who escaped a similar fate in 1942, in spite of insane jealousy over the ploughboy, was Alan Price.

Alan Price quarrelled most persistently after leaving the army and quarrelled ironically, with Major Nixon who owned the ruined Nixon Hall and estate, but lived miles away on the Border at Belcoo. Nixon was one of Ulster's richest men and for generations his family had been involved closely with successive members of the royal family. In *The Remarkable Irish* Mark Bence Jones says, 'The magnificent kilted figure of Sir Shane Leslie stands alone in the Irish world of letters.' But the Roman Catholic, Nationalist politician, Sir Shane Leslie, was not alone in writing of royal visits to his Ulster home because the Protestant Lord Erne, Grand Master of the Orange Order, also wrote of royal guests. A royal signature that graced both ancestral homes was that of Queen Victoria's son Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught, who went in 1904 as the general commanding British forces in Ireland, where he and his duchess made friends of Commander Nixon and his sister Mrs Norris. When Prince Arthur went to Canada as Governor General in 1911 the Nixons followed.

Commander Nixon is still remembered today in Canada as the founder of a naval college, but when I met his sister Mrs Norris she was housekeeper of Shawnigan Lake School which her lover Christopher Lonsdale had started in 1913. The Nixons and their royal guests went to the Nixon Hall estate for seasonal shooting and so they all knew the Grahams' adjoining farm which Major Nixon leased for shooting at a pound a year 'when he remembered to pay.' It did not take much reminding that there was more than fresh buttermilk for the major and his guests during a hot day on Granshagh Hill, and it was

because they also knew me when I lived at Granshagh as an evacuee that I later became a housemaster at Shawnigan Lake School in 1950 where Adeline de la Feld joined me.

Perhaps Sir Basil and Lady Brooke would have been less than enthusiastic about me and their two racehorses would doubtless have had other names than *Song of Erne* if the Brookes had realised that I was as Left-wing as their relative Adeline de la Feld. However, I was not the only person about whom they changed their mind. Another Brooke family connection was Princess Dilkusha de Rohan who had been very useful to Sir Basil during the war because of her job in the Ministry of Information but who afterwards became an acute embarrassment to him. Sir Basil had gone over the head of the Stormont Government in 1941 simply because he had such direct links with the British Establishment.

Not only did Brooke know Dil as a First World War ward of Lord Ernest Hamilton, a local Ulster MP, but Dil's brother John Wrench married the sister of the Imperial Grand Master, Sir George Clark. Like the newspaper magnate Brendan Bracken at the Ministry of Information, shrewd Basil Brooke not only knew of propaganda's indispensable importance to the war effort but also the importance to propaganda of some indispensable people. The Rt Hon Frederick Wrench, of Killiney outside Dublin, had others besides John and Dil in his family since his son, Sir John Wrench, was married to Sir Basil's cousin Hylda Brooke. Sir John Wrench was the founder both of the Overseas League and the English Speaking Union and for some years was editor of *The Spectator*. These were the sort of strong links that bred Brooke's disdain of his cabinet colleagues during the war and led him to rely on people such as Alfred Arnold in Belfast and Dil de Rohan in London to sort out problems which, as in the case of Alan Price, so often featured the unfortunate and potentially dangerous combination of money and homosexuality.

Sir Basil Brooke knew how to avoid a major political scandal and how to protect his own reputation. He had three sons who were all in the army, because of course the Brookes of Colebrooke were a military dynasty founded in 1598 when Captain Sir Basil Brooke was sent with reinforcements to Ireland by his English sovereign. The Second World War would be much influenced by Prime Minister Brooke's uncle, Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke and his fellow Ulster commanders. But the women were also military-minded, and the English mother of Prime Minister Brooke's children was the Senior Commandant of the ATS. Her husband had a fright in the war when the ship-workers of Belfast went on strike demanding £7 a week instead of £4.10.0d for a 47-hour week. Sir Basil told the press that the strike was 'an act of sabotage against the war effort and a betrayal of the men who fight.'

Senior Commandant Brooke of the ATS agreed with her husband and she wanted him to get his powerful relations and friends at Westminster to introduce conscription into Northern Ireland which would soon solve the problem of the Southerners crossing the Border without a work permit and taking Protestant jobs. Not only the Nationalists of Fermanagh and the Protestant trade unionists of Belfast objected to conscription but so did de Valera and the Roman Catholic bishops in the South, and it was the Dublin government which allowed its fire-engines to put out the burning cities of the North. A prominent character in the family a generation before had been Colonel George Brooke of the Prince of Wales Leinster Regiment who also had an English wife, Adela, daughter of Lord Charles Pelham Clinton of the Duke of Newcastle's family. Prime Minister and Lady Brooke dearly loved Tibby Lecky-Browne-Lecky going around dressed as Lady Windermere, while their three unmarried sons, unlike Adeline de la Feld's mother, had certainly not been aghast at 'Lady' Arthur Pelham Clinton being arrested because he was in fact a man.

When Lady Brooke went off to lead her ATS to war she did not want any scandals of 'the Oscar Wilde kind' raked up by people like Alan Price who had not been able to soldier on in his own regiment but returned to Fermanagh to make trouble. In 1942 Cynthia Brooke was not to know that two of her very soldierly sons would be killed later in the war, but her instinct told her that their friendship with Cecil Lowry-Corry and Alan Price might lead to a scandal. Colebrooke, where the Brooke boys lived, lay on the other side of Enniskillen from Florencecourt where Viscount Cole lived. The three Brooke boys and Michael Cole had been at Eton together so they knew the road well between the two stately homes.

Not only Granshagh Orange Hall lay along the route but so did Skea Hall, another Georgian mansion which belonged to the Tubmans of Clonbunniagh before the war, and to Anthony Blunt's boyhood friend, Pudding Lane, 5th Duke of Westminster, after the war. Although the Tubmans made no pretence of being gentry, they were one of three families involved with Lord Cole's social scene in the 1930s. Today their memorials can be seen as stained glass windows. The Montgomery family has such a memorial at Fivemiletown church, while the Duke of Westminster is similarly represented at Monea church, but the largest and most spectacular of these coloured windows is to Willie Tubman's parents and is at Bellanaleck church where I was prepared for Confirmation by the Rev Edwin Kingston whose wife sang for many years with Peter Montgomery's Fivemiletown Choral Society.

It made no difference that Willie Tubman had not been to Eton with his friend Lord Cole and they loved the dances at Granshagh Orange Hall where the Brooke boys came to see their schoolfriend Cole play his accordion.

Those were happy times as shown by the jolly snapshots taken at many places, such as on the steps of the Tubmans' Skea Hall with the former soldier Alan Price as the centre of attention, for Alan, Willie Tubman and George Carson were the three Granshagh neighbours over whom Sir Basil Brooke's Unionist/Orange organisation entertained great expectations as the younger generation destined to take over Orange affairs from the ageing James Graham and the Dowler brothers.

It pleased Cynthia Brooke no end when even the King's daughter and heir to the Protestant throne, Princess Elizabeth, joined the ATS and Lady Brooke could return as chatelaine of Colebrooke to sort out the Catholic rebels who crossed the Border and lent support to the ne'er-do-wells of trade unionists. Lady Brooke felt particularly gratified when Viscount Cole, albeit with far from a clean bill of health, went into the British army to be followed soon after by his friend Willie Tubman. Poor George Carson did not join them because his home burnt down before he was certified and sent to Omagh. That left Alan Price to keep the home fires burning which, in a sense, his arsonist father-in-law had started doing during the First World War.

Sir Basil and Lady Brooke expressed horror when Alan Price became friendly with a farm labourer called Willoughby who was in the service of Fred Dowler of Derrygiff near Grahams' farm at Granshagh which the Dowlers had previously owned in the days when Christy Graham was land steward at Lisgoole Abbey. So much gossip and so much suspicion followed Fred Dowler's sudden death that officialdom could not ignore the rumours and the police ordered the exhumation of the body from Bellanaleck churchyard.

In 1989 George Cathcart reminded me of his role in the affair, 'A cousin of my wife was head of the RUC at the time, Head Constable Frank Thornton and he was prosecution officer. They exhumed Fred Dowler's body in the churchyard up here at six o'clock one morning, and my wife's father had after building a new hayshed across the way from our place and the coffin was brought down to this shed. The pathologist from Londonderry came down and inspected the body and I happened to be there and saw the whole thing, and the remarkable thing about it was that there had been no question but that he was poisoned by strychnine because the body was preserved. He was the same as the day he went into Bellanaleck churchyard.

Mrs Dowler stood trial in Enniskillen and the judge was a man called Black and Head Constable Frank Thornton told me in his opinion afterwards, he was quite convinced she was guilty but he felt that the judge - it was his first murder trial - and he gave the lady the benefit of the doubt and acquitted her. Head Thornton went to live in England when he retired and one day he and his wife went into a restaurant in Liverpool for afternoon tea and the

waitress who came to serve them was Mrs Dowler. There was no recognition of either of them, or at least they did not show it. Neither passed any remarks until he asked for his bill and she handed it to him and went off with it. When she came back with his change she spoke for the first time, "I wonder you took that tea Head, you weren't afraid it might be poisoned." So you can imagine what kind of woman she was. She married young Willoughby, but he's dead since.'

Many of our Granshagh neighbours had not even been in a bus until taken to give evidence at Mrs Dowler's trial when, doubtless from fear of appearing against a well-known friend and neighbour as much as from the novel form of transport, travel-sickness struck them. Alan Price became the expert on the Dowler murder case for he had been a close friend of the young farmboy Willoughby and claimed to have known the day and place where the strychnine was bought. Little wonder Lizzie Graham never allowed Alan near the tea urn at Granshagh Hall dances especially after another farmboy went to live with the murdered Fred Dowler's relations and Alan started midnight raids on their thatched home.

The Dowler murder case caused such interest in the province that Belfast's newspaper boys were besieged by readers wanting the latest edition. Sir Basil Brooke wanted to avoid a major political scandal caused by Alan Price's war on the Dowler farm and sent his private secretary, Alfred Arnold, posthaste to sort the homosexual element in the dispute out. Sir Basil wanted to protect his family's reputation as well as heal this nasty split between Orangemen and Unionists. He had his three unmarried sons in mind and Alfred Arnold was sent to recover all photographs taken of them with Cecil Lowry-Corry, Lord Cole, and any other Big House cadet who, however temporarily, had been foolish enough to fall for Alan Price's good looks and Irish charm.

Although Major Nixon and J M Carson the quarry-owner sued Alan over the Belcoo houses, they had been unable to recover the money because the farm at that period was in the name of Alan's wife. But now, in 1942, Alan was a widower and sole owner of the farm and he had recently caused a great deal of damage to property apart from terrorising a number of innocent people. But Alan's elder son, Allie, who went to school with me, naturally expected to succeed to what had been his mother's property.

Major Anthony Blunt of MI5 and Sir Basil Brooke's right-hand man, Alfred Arnold, both with long-established homosexual interests in Ulster, decided between them that, in view of pressure from Dublin and the IRA about the presence of 38,000 American troops in the North, the Protestant community should at least be united. The ten-year dispute between Major Nixon and Alan Price had to be settled, and so did the question of the midnight

raids on the Dowlers that could not be blamed convincingly on the IRA. Moreover, too many Unionists had been repeating Tommy Henderson's view 'that the government is no good.' Well Sir Basil Brooke had taken over from the no-good John Andrews as Prime Minister in a bitter internal Unionist Party revolt, and Brooke thought the time had come to stop such disputes within the party and unite in ridding the North of illegal immigrants and the new IRA bombers.

I was now fourteen years old, over six feet tall, shaving and generally being taken for a much older person. This was important to Alfred Arnold's plans. Alan Price must be lured away from plaguing the family of Councillor John Dowler, whose son-in-law, the County Horticulturist, lived in the same thatched farmhouse. So 'Serge from North Carolina,' one of the newly arrived American soldiers, was procured as a sexual partner for Alan. Serge wanted to visit his ancestors' home in Sligo and this meant doing so in civilian clothes for crossing into neutral Eire. I was the only person with a wardrobe to accommodate. But before crossing the Border there had to be a meeting with Major Nixon at Belcoo, near the site where Alan had built the six houses without paying the Enniskillen tradesmen.

Councillor John Dowler was an elderly, extremely religious man with an undisguisable wooden leg and in his farmhouse the Methodist minister conducted the winter services rather than in the unheated iron hall at Mullaghy. On the other hand he was extremely superstitious and I wrote of him, 'Joe Kyle, second gardener at the abbey, found the best of preaching at Parson's Grove where Rural District Councillor Dowler testified to seeing the Wee People in broad daylight as clearly as everyone else saw the councillor's own pegleg spoor.'

People acknowledged John Dowler as a conscientious politician and I knew that some Catholics voted for such a moderate man in a council chaired by the bigotted Orangeman, Cecil Lowry-Corry, the protector of Alan Price. Dowler had belonged to Cecil's own Orange Lodge until 10 August 1933 when Cecil wrote from Castlecoole to the District Master, Willie Caldwell, 'Dear Bro Caldwell, The Enniskillen District LOL No 5 will grant the transfer certificate of Bro John Dowler, RDC, (formerly of LOL 892) to Granshagh LOL No 1709 for the sum of Half a Crown. On receipt of that amount I will send on the transfer certificate to you, Yours fraternally.'

After due payment of the half-a-crown, letters went into our kitchen-drawer at Granshagh as James Graham was the treasurer at that time. Cecil died in 1949 only having been Earl of Belmore for a year and his cousin the present earl was interviewed by Peter Montgomery's nephew Hugh in the **Daily Telegraph** on 10 September 1988 under the headline, 'Hugh Montgomery-Massingberd lambasts the National Trust for "a scandal"' since

that body had just spent £3.2 million on restoring Castlecoole. All a long way from the days when District Master Cecil was writing about half-crowns.

In 1942 both Catholics and Protestants of our district were not a little amazed that Alan Price was not certified and sent to Omagh for 'the head rest'. But the Catholics knew Alan as well as I did and rightly suspected that the old problems would emerge again after the war with Hitler ended and that old scores would be settled or inflamed by the bullet as indeed Ulster's civil war of the 1970s and 80s proved. The local row in the 1970s, as during the 1940s, would be between Unionists, namely Anthony Blunt's other friends, the Duke of Westminster and the ennobled Basil Brooke, Viscount Brookeborough. But Alfred Arnold's name also appeared in the letters Peter Montgomery wrote to me while he stayed with Blunt at the Courtauld Institute and which Sir George Terry's Sussex police came to question me about.

Our local taxi service in Fermanagh doubled as Morrison's Funeral Parlour which meant that the limousines which eventually took us to Major Nixon's house in Belcoo and then across the Border, were too wide to drive up the narrow Granshagh lane. As there were always Catholic neighbours and Free State farmboys calling at the Grahams' farm 'Serge of North Carolina' and his friend had to chage into my clothes in Granshagh Orange Hall. It was very late when we returned from our mission and the two Americans got into their uniforms by torches in Granshagh Orange Hall. Six or so people had made the journey and as I was not used to drinking spirits the outing had left me more than a little drunk.

The day ended in a way I could not forget. In the blackout Serge suddenly seized me with a bear-hug farewell and assured me that the visit to his ancestral home in Sligo had been a most wonderful trip, adding 'Honey, it was just heaven. You Irish boys are sure great. That big cuddly Alan has given me such delicious babies.' For the first time in my life I had met somebody who admitted being a passive homosexual man, the one who played Margaret in the 'George and Margaret' bedroom scene so-called by Noel Coward, that other friend of Peter Murphy who enlivened the stately homes of Lord and Lady Mountbatten.

A number of writers have referred to our cross-Border journey, some claiming it was initiated by Guy Burgess who may well have encountered Alan Price during Alan's days as a soldier. It is also possible that Anthony Blunt was in one of the limousines returning to Granshagh and that he tried to have sex with me. But this hardly justifies the assertion made by Ken Livingstone in his political book about Labour in the 1990s that Anthony Blunt was my lover. Livingstone also states that the Kincora enquiry 'was by Sir George Terry, the Chief Constable of West Sussex police, whose force had been responsible for investigating the claims of Mr ABC' meaning

myself. A closer examination of these documents in police hands would show that although I tolerated Anthony Blunt's acquaintanceship, at no time did I ever trust him. I was never his friend in the way I was a friend of Hugh Montgomery, the Catholic priest, who tried to sort out some of the IRA's grievances caused by Blunt's use of Blessingbourne long before I became a wartime evacuee.

It was a sad day for me when, having passing my fourteenth birthday I ceased being the Grahams' evacuee and started life as a working man in my native Belfast. James went out early to fetch the ass to take me by cart into Enniskillen. I loved Granshagh farm and the elderly farmer and his sister Lizzie who ran it. Alan Price's intrigues never failed to intrigue me because I wanted Tom McGowan to win, not just because being a Catholic prevented him from marrying Lizzie, but because he was a man who never betrayed his friends or his country.

Back in Belfast one of the busiest times of my life began that left little time for homesickness over Granshagh. A family friend was chief-engineer with the Dutch company dredging Belfast Lough at one end and reclaiming land on the County Down side further out to sea. Excitement filled the air as the Admiralty prepared for both the Americans coming and the British fleet going to the invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe.

Besides the two major ships, a whole fleet of barges and tugs swirled to and fro, manned by crews of many nationalities. The reclaimer down the lough needed a cabin boy and I got the job. Most of the time the Dutch skipper slept ashore but his brother, Mister Jerry, made himself very much one of the twenty boys who shared the tiers of berths around the mess-room I had to tend most of the day and often the night as well if a drunken crew member screamed abuse if in my role as ferryman I did not move fast enough in my bumboat to pick him up. Two crewmen aboard the reclaimer would enter my later life and books. The apprentice ship's carpenter, Emmanuel Psychoundakis, known as 'Taddy the Greek'. only a few years my senior, taught me more than the Greek alphabet.

In **Up Spake the Cabin Boy** I wrote, 'Sometimes too, the paint chippers would be working overtime, their hammers beating without rhythm against the old boat's sides.' One of those paint chippers was Sam Thompson, already in the limelight as a playwright in 1961 when my book came out. Not until he was 39, with twenty-five years in the shipyards already behind him did Sam decide to become an actor. The reason was simple enough. He became infuriated with the false and emasculated dialogue passed off in films and plays about the shipyards as the real thing. For years he had heard his mother say 'Take a tram and go over the bridge', and the first play he wrote was called just that, **Over the Bridge**.

Sam Thompson had a breakdown following the success of **Over the Bridge**, the bridge we had crossed to go to work. In the Royal Victoria Hospital Alfred Arnold took him a copy of **Up Spake the Cabin Boy** and Sam instantly recognised himself as one of the paint chippers and the book's account of my career as a preacher inspired him to write the play **The Evangelist**. But my book not only tells of my experience as a cabin boy on the Dutch dredger but also of a different experience when an unnatural voice from the dead spoke up at a Spiritualist meeting I attended in 1942 with Alfred Arnold.

This so fascinated me, not least for its novelty, that I went to a number of private meetings with Alfred who had great admiration for the 'young soldier, the faith healer' I wrote about. I knew Alfred for over forty years, twenty of them in Ulster and London and the rest in Gozo, the Maltese island he settled on after Anthony Blunt carried out the plot to destroy Alfred's career. Irrepressible as always, Alfred created a lively theatrical milieu wherever he went with his own musicals or operas produced and translated into Maltese by Alfred. But there would also be occult dabbings, from black mass with Evan Tredegar to emotional sessions in Malta's hypogeum which Basil Brooke went to, for he remained faithful to Alfred even after the downfall engineered by Anthony Blunt.

I still work closely with Alfred's music and theatre colleagues, an expression of my fond memories of him, a fondness quite the opposite of the strong aversion I felt for two other people who knew him, Henry Lynch-Robinson, who left Belfast in disgrace and likewise went to Gozo, and the painter Sidney Smith.

Being a senior civil servant Alfred had to be on friendly terms with Adrian Lynch-Robinson, the Permanent Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs, and because of their temperaments and abilities it was inevitable that two such lively homosexuals as Alfred and Adrian's son Henry should become big fish in the relatively confined pond of Belfast's social and artistic scene. Alfred and I first visited Gozo in 1963, when Alfred was at the peak of his career in Ulster and playing excerpts from his new musical to Peter Montgomery and me at Blessingbourne. As we stood on Gozo gazing at its blue bays, neither of us could possibly have foreseen that the day would come when both he and Henry Lynch-Robinson would be living like two Crusoes on the tiny Mediterranean island, virtually marooned and plaguing the life out of each other.

As a boy of ten I had been suspicious of Henry's grand airs and arrogance towards my mother and me, for my Great-aunt Rebecca had told me that Henry's mother came from County Donegall and had secrets not to be mentioned. He was one of the young men who went to 'Uncle' Hughie

Campbell's house near his parents' home. I knew that Henry sometimes cried because his mother had made a scene and he had to carry food on a tray upstairs and set it outside her locked bedroom door. An ordeal for the children in our house was to be asked how long it had been since we did a 'number two' at the outside lavatory, for constipation never seemed to end and resulted in breakfast being spoilt by senna pods. But we were always anxious to learn for how long Mrs Lynch-Robinson had kept up her latest bout of sulking and depression behind locked doors. Henry was aware I knew of his mother's dreadful secret, yet he continued to make me angry by his arrogant treatment of my mother. Henry also knew there were secrets about my mother's birth. But usually Henry was laughing in a high-camp way and practising ballroom steps in order to take Grace Hamilton dancing. During the war Grace had married the artist Sidney Smith who had a studio which attracted important people like Sir Orme Rowan-Hamilton, a retired High Court judge whose favourite topic of conversation was Archibald Hamilton Rowan. In 1942 the judge's cousin, Sir Harold Nicolson, was putting the finishing touches to *The Desire to Please* which told the story of Hamilton Rowan and the United Irishmen who included John Bryans who according to Shane Leslie, lived to be 125. I became extremely interested in the fact that Protestants had so long ago risen against the English who inhabited such places as Castlecoole, Nixon Hall and Basil Brooke's Colebrooke.

I was fourteen years old when I rose up in rebellion at the proud Henry Lynch-Robinson who tried to get me on my knees to perform an act of fellatio. But I was ancient compared with the age of other children sexually abused by Sidney Smith and others of his group. The child most frequently sexually assaulted by various people was Sidney's own daughter who went on holiday with other children, all under the age of five, and all of whom, boys as well as girls, were, as the euphemism goes, deflowered. Although later the medical authorities monitored these cases, no prosecutions ensued, unlike the court proceedings in which Tommy Morteon found himself having made his schoolgirl daughter pregnant on Cleenish Island 'by mistaken identity in the blackout.'

A massive blackout on the activities of Sidney Smith and his highly-placed friends was certainly maintained for over twenty years until Sidney died and his business associate, Henry Lynch-Robinson, went into exile on Gozo. For years I had heard rumours about this coterie of child sex abusers, but only when Ken Livingstone started asking questions of Prime Minister Thatcher did I think it necessary to have statements in writing from Sidney's widow, Grace Smith. On 31 March 1989 she wrote, 'If, when Sidney sent you several press cuttings about why Francis received such a long sentence the date was after 1957 when Sidney left home. I did not ask Sidney to leave

Randolph Crescent. Lord M. came one evening for after-dinner drinks with and when he asked to see Sidney's studio the latter told him he hadn't got a studio, a snobbish lie for his studio was next door to the sitting-room, a largish room full of canvases and the easels of his pupils who'd been recommended by Bill MacQuitty (I never met one of them.) I asked him to find a studio outside the home because he was interfering sexually with our daughter. I didn't realise Sidney was abusing Paula until after, at ten, she'd seen a psychiatrist when, I think she felt able to tell me.'

Francis, who served an exceptionally long sentence in Belfast's Crumlin Road prison, appeared in my book *No Surrender* as well as in the press. His sexual activity had been with older children than Sidney Smith's, but the severity of Francis's sentence, according to Anthony Blunt, may have been due to the fact that he had served as a wartime sailor with his friend Lord Mountbatten. The long sentence, however, was a considerable embarrassment to Captain Peter Montgomery, another friend of Lord Mountbatten, because Peter was the Visitor of Belfast Prison and seldom went there without chatting to Francis. Peter tried very hard to be fair in his dealing and he felt disturbed by the injustice of the sailor's sentence which was clearly intended not so much to punish Francis as to silence him, a situation made all the more obvious by the fact that Sidney Smith and his cronies were allowed to continue their child abuse without prosecution let alone imprisonment.

Having read about himself in *No Surrender* Francis wrote to me for years and I passed his letters on to Anthony Blunt who also thought that something should be done. But although these letters were mentioned before Mr Justice Swanwick in 1971, nothing came of it because Blunt's immunity from prosecution over his spying meant that he did not want to face cross-examination which, as Barrie Penrose states in *Conspiracy of Silence*, the government still kept concealed from the public at that time. When Francis eventually got his release, he met with some difficulty over another old shipmate in Rottingdean.

In the days long before Sam Thompson was writing plays and I was sketching him and Alfred Arnold in *Ulster*, I took on an extra job aboard the Dutch dredger which was to write letters for the illiterate, enclosing postal orders for family allowances. But then one day a letter came for me from Lizzie Graham at Granshagh. I had sent them a tin of red oxide paint for the rusty posts of the hayshed. James had fallen down while painting, and a nail had gone through his foot. To Alan Price's delight Tom McGowan had been packed off home once more across the Border leaving only Lizzie to lift the potato crop. Without consulting anyone I jumped ship and caught the first train back to Enniskillen and Granshagh.

Having persuaded James to see a doctor instead of John Quinn by the

Five Points Crossroads, a seventh son, renowned as a faith-healer and charmer, I started on the two potato fields by hand. Since I had left Belfast without collecting my wages, insurance card or the all-important ration-card, which of course was still a child's blue one, I duly expected the police. Instead, Alan Price turned up at Granshagh as officialdom's harbinger with 'The Honourable Cecil wants to see you at the Council office tomorrow morning. There now you know there.'

The fact that Cecil Lowry-Corry wanted to see me at his Council office rather than up at Castle Coole lent the due weight of authority to his summons but that he had asked Alan Price to confront me at Granshagh astonished me since only a few months previously we had quite believed Alan to be on the point of being sent into Omagh asylum. But Alan, like Sidney Smith, was protected in contrast to poor Francis the sailor. I certainly had not expected the type of question old Cecil had been preparing, complete with stutter which always grew worse at the discussion of important matters. He fired his first salvo. Why was I financing the IRA?

This referred to the postal orders I occasionally sent Lizzie if Tom McGowan had to pay a fine at Major Dickie's Petty Sessions for being drunk and disorderly at the fair, or needed his rail fare to come down from Manorhamilton in the Free State. Because I knew Lizzie to be in love with the rebel Tom and that it was solely through him being a Catholic that they could not marry and remain in Fermanagh, I revelled in his company and lauded him in my books later. I despised Alan Price for using the situation to avoid punishment for his long-running campaign against old John Dowler. But of course, being a police super-grass in order to keep in with the likes of Cecil Lowry-Corry, who was likewise never prosecuted for his sexual offences against children, Alan was protected by the Establishment. There were local Catholics who rightly objected to this sort of Big House corruption of law and order and who were not surprised when the IRA sought revenge on the house of the Prices of Laragh.

The summons to Chairman Cecil's Council office in 1942, however, turned out to be not solely for the purpose of ticking me off, but to convey the news that one of the Orange brethren in Belfast had found me a job with Clokey's, at that time Belfast's major glass and paint merchants. Clokey's had a celebrated stained-glass department where my flair for drawing might find an opening. But, insisted Cecil, his stutter now abating, I must go prepared, that is, better dressed. With this Cecil personally conducted me to Davie Elliott's for a new sports jacket. Just as Alan Price had married into local property, so did Davie Elliott by marrying the sister of Willie Tubman of Clonbunniagh who built the bridal couple a very superior bungalow which was our nearest neighbour. But the bungalow seemed rather pokey compared

with Mrs Elliott's girlhood home at Skea Hall which the Duke of Westminster was to buy. When Davie came with us to sort out the row between Alan Price and Major Nixon at Belcoo, we little imagined that when the major died, Davie himself would move into the major's splendid 'gentleman's residence.'

When Cecil Lowry-Corry took me to buy new clothes it was partly an excuse to talk to the extremely beautiful Davie Elliott in the outfitter's shop, and Davie was fully aware that 'castle folk' as well as those in gentlemen's residences admired his good looks. I definitely knew what kind of jacket I wanted. It had to have two vents at the back known as an 'Oxford bum freezer.' This description brought great laughter from the staff and customers and Davie Elliott diplomatically huddled the huge hulk of purple-faced Cecil Lowry-Corry away from my language. Being Orange brothers Davie and Cecil used such terms as being 'saved from thuggery and buggery' by 'the great and good King William' but in public where Catholics might be listening, we were not allowed to use certain words. Davie Elliott was a natural giggler and in between bouts he managed to get a sports jacket in Lisbellaw tweed.

The jacket being too wide had to be taken in by the tailor at the back of the shop. I experienced equal amounts of delight and embarrassment when the old man took the pins out of his mouth trying to find how much the coat needed taking in, and after probing my bottom announced, 'Be Jaysus, the man wants an arse-flap and he hasn't got an arse to hang the thing on.' The pleasure of being called a man when I was still only fourteen immediately faded when I realised that whatever success Taddy-the-Greek had met with by giving me exercises to develop my over-six-foot tall body clearly did not include my posterior, and that I remained almost 'arse-less.' Everybody in the shop understood this term but not 'Oxford bum freezer.' I viewed my new Lisbellaw tweed jacket as a bribe, given in the vain hope that I would turn against the rebel Tom McGowan who had to be prevented from marrying Lizzie and so deprived of a claim on good Protestant land.

I also appreciated the fact that Davie Elliott and I had to play double-crossing games with both Alan Price and Cecil Lowry-Corry over Tom McGowan. Davie loved being boss at the Clonbunniagh farm during his brother-in-law's absence in the army, but he also adored his position as the Adonis in charge of Enniskillen's nearest thing to Savile Row. So while Davie lorded it over the shop counter, Tom McGowan was doing the farm work before spending his evenings over at Granshagh with other Catholics who were equally good singers and neighbours and who would delight the BBC Television audience in 1965 when James Boyce filmed my wartime friends.

Fortunately we had a good friend in Police Constable Cairns who seriously advised Willie Moreton to plead guilty over having a child by his

daughter as it was a case of mistaken identity in the blackout. My first encounter with 'Old Bob Cairns' took place as James Graham and I drove home from Enniskillen one winter Fair Day and the policeman stopped us. 'Don't you know there's a war on?' he shouted as we came along the dark Sligo Road with no light on our donkey cart. 'Now get along home before you meet another policeman and get us all into trouble,' he beckoned us on.

When Alan Price sneaked to the police that Tom McGowan had again crossed the Border without a permit and had been seen more than once taking cows to service with George Carson's bull, we delighted to meet Old Bob for we could truthfully report that we had last seen Tom heading for the Sligo Road. The report failed to add that Tom would not cross the Border for his home in Manorhamilton, but would only go to Curran's pub, presided over by Miss Curran who for many years had never washed or combed her enormous mop of hair which contained numerous feathers from the fowl she plucked as she watched Tom and his drinking pals sing their Republican songs.

An important member of the community was James Rooney, the Pross Server of Crownhall who had to deal with the Civil Bills from the law courts. On 11th July 1966 his daughter, Mrs Florence Thompson, went to visit Lizzie Graham and afterwards wrote to me, 'First Lizzie wants to know if you are coming over soon. I believe she wrote you two letters last week and then burnt them because Allie Price didn't turn up for post-duties. She wants you to know that Tom McGowan was up for 2 or 3 days and cut the turf. Hughie Slavin has had an attack of nerves and went to Omagh. A call from the TV boys made Lizzie very happy and they promised another visit. I hope you can read this Jones Memorial School script. I had the pleasure of knowing you on your high bicycle at Crownhall. I was only six years old, but old enough to enquire who that boy was.'

It pleased me to receive this letter in Canada, pointing out that Tom McGowan was still crossing the Border after nearly thirty years to cut turf for the almost blind James Graham. I read with sadness that my schoolfriend, Allie Price, was the postman, since he, his wife and children had been thrown out of the farm which Allie's mother had owned. The last great hate in Alan Price's life was not the Catholic Tom McGowan or the Protestant son-in-law to John Dowler, but Alan's own elder son.

Feeling very pleased with my Lisbellaw tweed jacket in 1942 I returned to Belfast and a new job at Clokey's glass shop where old faces such as Alfred Arnold and Sidney Smith appeared. The blitz had destroyed many public buildings and the stained glass department at Clokey's was enlarged to cope with a big demand for memorial windows in churches of all denominations. Sidney Smith and his art students had aesthetic interests there, and so did I, but not so much in stained glass as in Betty Maxwell,

secretary to Mr Harold Clokey, the company chairman. The barrier to my enthusiasm was that she was saved and as much concerned for my soul as for my body, especially when she realised I went to Spiritualist meetings with Alfred Arnold.

Since the 'Great Revival' of 1859 Belfast has been through many moments when the sparks seemed about to set the city on fire for God. In the 1920s quite a few sparks flew when W P Nicholson, a seaman, got saved and left the sea and the bottle to become the most talked-about hellfire evangelist on the Presbyterian platform while Hellfire Jack kept the Methodist cause ablaze on the Custom House steps. By 1942 Pastor Tom Rea had risen as the star evangelist at his mission-church on the Ravenhill Road, not far from the Iron Mission where my Great-uncle Samuel Devine also proclaimed the Gospel in and out of season. It was to Pastor Rea's that Betty Maxwell took me and afterwards to the penitents' stool in the church hall. I succumbed to the combined onslaught of mission-hall hysteria and Betty's determination to get me saved and therefore presentable at her parents' Christian home where grace was said before and after high tea. So I duly got saved and spared no effort to take my new status seriously. I soon joined a Gospel Tract Band and undertook similar activities that would further my cause with Betty. Despite, or perhaps because of, many millions of words on the subject the difference between being saved and not being saved is incapable of rational definition, as it is a matter of emotion and not reason.

Because Hellfire Jack Bryans had been introduced to preaching on the Custom House steps thirty years before by the Rev William Maguire, and because I was so closely identified with Maguire's son, Canon Charles of St Simon's, old Jack now lost no time in getting me to give my 'testimony' on the steps. My performances there, however, caught the attention of the impresario of evangelical affairs and lawyer to the various missions, William Fulton, who never gave up talent-spotting for new recruits to follow the lead given in 1898 by the seven young men who left him behind in Belfast while they sailed off to found the Egypt General Mission. The Saturday night open-air service outside Moses Hunter's pub was still held every week with William Fulton still beseeching the sinners inside to come out to the penitents' stool. Through all the years since my father's death, his brother Willie had continued to drink in the pub and did not conceal his amusement at my following in Hellfire Jack's footsteps.

On the saved and William Fulton front, I salvaged a modicum of self-respect by refusing to listen to the one track evangelical music at Pastor Rea's church, going instead on Sunday's to St Anne's Cathedral where my parents had married and where my school friend Wier Johnston and his mother sang in the well-known choir. The missionary I knew best, John Hind, had been

called from his native Belfast in 1902, the year before my father was born, to save China's millions. By 1918 he had been enthroned as the Bishop of Fuh-Kien. His friend in Belfast, Bishop MacNeice, often preached and wrote about 'The Cause of Christ in China' especially in the diocese of Fuh-Kien since it was heavily financed by Dublin University Fuh-Kien Mission.

When I went to work in Clokey's in 1942 Bishop MacNeice was dying and his old friend, Bishop Hind, who had retired from Fuh-Kien to run the Church Missionary Society in Ireland, had taken over many episcopal duties in Belfast. One of these was an ordination service when he laid hands on Samuel Bennett Crooks who became a curate at St Anne's Cathedral and for many years Dean of Belfast.

In 1930 Archdeacon MacNeice wrote of St James's Church, Belfast, 'The foundation stone of this stately and beautiful church was laid on the 4th September 1869, by John Hind, granduncle of John Hind, who is now Bishop in Fuh-Kien.' The Ulster family of Hind were rich patrons to St James's in Belfast while the rich Ulster family of Crichton lent their rich patronage to the Rev Stanley Blunt's St John's in Paddington. When the spy-catching authors started their hunt in Ulster they found Blunt's name and my own in the guest book at Blessingbourne where General Montgomery had for long been patron of the local church. One of the letters Louis MacNeice gave to me is dated the 19 January 1939 from Blessingbourne to Bishop MacNeice in which General Montgomery says, 'Again say not the struggle nought availeth! The enclosed is the result of a wordy match with old Copeland Trimble of the Impartial Reporter, the principal Fermanagh Unionist leaf, after three rather hostile leading articles on his side. I am sending a copy to McRory.' Anthony Blunt fully understood why General Montgomery was sending a cutting from the Impartial Reporter in 1939 to Cardinal McRory, the Irish Primate, just as Blunt was the MI5 expert in 1942 who stayed with General Montgomery to ensure that the Impartial Reporter did not report Alan Price's outrageous acts against John Dowler in contrast to the paper's splash about the murder of Fred Dowler.

I had not only listened for years to Bishop MacNeice preaching for 'The Cause of Christ in China' but had also heard the Bishop of Fuh-Kien himself, so now that he had left the Gates-of-the-Sixth-Happiness and come home to Belfast to recruit others for the Lord's Far-Eastern vineyard, off I went to his Church Missionary Society office. I was fifteen years old but generally looking and behaving like a twenty-year old. Bishop Hind arranged for me to have Latin and Greek lessons with Sammy Crooks at St Stephen's Rectory in Mount Charles where the three Farren sisters spent much of their life as did Forrest Reid.

My books about Ulster refer throughout to my family's links with the

Church of Ireland, yet when the former head of the Methodist Church in Ireland, Dr Eric Gallagher wrote the history of the Belfast Central Mission his pages featured Hellfire Jack and others of the Bryans clan including me, cheek-by-jowl with Ian Paisley and William Fulton and sundry others who preached at the Custom House steps. The William Maguire who started much of it, was a Methodist minister, but two of his three ordained sons became Anglican clergy, the best-known being Canon Charles of St Simon's. In his book Eric Gallagher refers to 'and the Reverend Louis W Crooks (1897-8) later to join the Church of Ireland.' Louis Crooks and his brother Samuel were both Anglican rectors like their friends Charles and Finlay Maguire, and remained close to that other pair of clerical brothers, Bishop and Canon MacNeice.

Anthony Blunt was just as capable as I was of unravelling the tangled skeins of the connections between the various Louis Crooks, Mrs MacNeice's Quaker relations and the Methodist fathers of Anglican canons. After all, Blunt had met most of them before I was born, yet it was usually me rather than Blunt who helped students researching their PhD theses on Louis MacNeice after the poet died. None of these Belfast clerics vied with each other over saving other people's souls from perdition or attacked each other from their pulpits. Ian Paisley was the exception to this rule, and he would not only use his own pulpit, but also his political platform as well as Sammy Crooks's cathedral to embarrass Pope Paul VI about sex orgies, which might strike some people as odd since there were sex orgies closer to home, namely in Belfast itself, which could have well have been used to embarrass other highly placed people.

For the moment, however, in the autumn of 1943 Paisley was a mere student out on the Custom House steps with Hellfire Jack Bryans, and I was at St Stephen's Rectory with the rector coaching me in Greek and his son Sammy listening to my Latin declensions, for Bishop Hind strongly recommended me to become an ordained missionary. William Fulton's burning passion remained the Egypt General Mission, and although it had a wide range of evangelical interests, its fame rested on the Shebeen Hospital, so I was also recommended and excitedly complied with the suggestion that I leave Clokey's stained-glass workshop and paint counter for Edmond Richie's chemist shop on the Newtownards Road. This stood near the Rope Works with several big factories nearby which gave us a rush of mill-girls during the lunch breaks coming for the perfumes I hated bottling. Feeling like the Sorcerer's Apprentice depicted in Dukas's music, I stood in the inner sanctum where I boiled a huge cauldron of mosses and herbs for cough mixture while peeping from time to time through a secret spyhole between ancient bottles with Latin names to ensure that nobody nicked french letters

or flannel knee-caps.

Edmond Richie had accepted me on condition I studied for the pharmaceutical examinations and he did not allow me to serve in the shop, so between pounding my pestle and mortar and weighing up packets of Epsom salts, I studied New Testament Greek and **White's Latin Dictionary**. The chemist shop also functioned as the headquarters of the local fire-watching, a voluntary night-time duty to keep watch for and give warning of German incendiary bombs which had already destroyed 3,200 houses totally and damaged another 56,000. I had to collect the money from the other businesses and work out the duty rota as well and ensure that buckets of sand and stirrup-pumps stood ready in their appointed places. As most people were reluctant to undertake these tasks I entered my own name on the rota most nights of the week and so doubled my wages. I was saving to become a missionary student.

My fire-watching took place in the two-roomed top floor of a draper's shop. The others used to stay up all night playing cards in anticipation of German air-raids, while in the room next door stood four iron beds which I used alone for some weeks until Robert Tight arrived. This Englishman had been invalided out of the army and as his father was a High Church parson Robert found St John's Church on the Malone road to his taste, and as it was the church nearest Bishop MacNeice's house on the same road, the bishop's family sometimes worshipped there, so I did not feel too much of a 'backslider' when I went to St John's with Robert Tight. The Rev J H Bloom was also an Englishman who served his title at St John's during the war and who wrote to me on 25 October 1966 after reading **Up Spake the Cabin Boy** about Bishop MacNeice saying that Curate Bloom's seventeen minute sermon would 'Never do at all. You must never preach more than fifteen minutes.'

I much preferred the short sermons at St John's delivered with quiet dignity (in fact too quiet for the bishop's deaf wife) to the hour-long psychotic ranting and raving Pastor Tom Rea indulged in during his hellfire sermons on the Ravenhill Road, a style which would be perpetuated and perpetrated by Ian Paisley on the same road for over forty years. Rather than tramp from door to door delivering Gospel tracts with Betty Maxwell, I preferred going to the theatre with Robert Tight who had his eye on an actress. Two stage people I met at this time turned up again later in my life.

I had seen Paddy Coyle before, as he cycled to and from his family home in Father Lappin's Fermanagh parish. Now he was in a play with a tall actress called Jean Hamilton, sister of Grace Smith, the artist's wife. We all went for homemade wine after the theatre to Alfred Arnold's flat and heard whispers that Forrest Reid was writing another book about his friendship with young Kenneth Hamilton who disappeared in Australia. Sure enough, **Young Tom** appeared some months later.

Jean Hamilton and two other women who had sipped Alfred's rosehip wine with me, all committed suicide and so far nobody has written about their deaths. Jean and I had both left Belfast before it became known that her three-year-old niece was amongst those sexually assaulted by her brother-in-law's circle of grand friends. I soon realised that whether people were saved or unsaved made little difference, for in their private lives the suppression or sublimation of sexual urges was often unacceptable, no matter what was said in public from the pulpit.

In the wartime Britain of 1944 as Forrest Reid put the finishing touches to the record of his friendship with young Kenneth Hamilton, E M Forster's young Cambridge admirers, Anthony Blunt and Guy Burgess were fiercely defending their master's precept that to betray friendship was worse than betraying one's country. However much I loved Forrest Reid's world of Pan in a Bog Meadows of 'leaves and running water,' and could see my tinker friend Mike as the strong and passionate Hermes, it was his sister Sophie I thought beautiful. Although I had been well and truly initiated into the Ulster gay scene that was to figure in a massive cover-up during the 1970s and 80s, at the time when Robert Tight and I roamed the blackout streets of Belfast we only sought girls to take back to the fire-fighting room above the draper's shop on the Newtownards Road.

Ulster Unionist MPs at Westminster were united for once with Tory and Labour members in condemning the fact that the whole conduct of the war rested in the hands of three people, each a sidekick of the other, Winston Churchill, Brendan Bracken and Lord Beaverbrook, Minister of Aircraft Production. Yet, although only death ended Beaverbrook's friendship with Bracken, the Canadian Presbyterian owner of the **Daily Express** had no scruples about sending a reporter off to Ireland to sniff out Bracken's Catholic birth and upbringing. There were many rows between Beaverbrook and Bracken and, on 23 July 1944, the Minister of Information came to the conclusion that his previously close friend Beaverbrook intended to destroy him. On that day, Beaverbrook's **Evening Standard** reprinted the tale told fifty years before in the **Waterford News** about Bracken's Irish Republican father being refused a gun licence by the police in Tipperary. Bracken blew his top and demanded that the offensive story be omitted from the later editions.

The prayers of a righteous man availeth much, or so the evangelicals believed, and indeed their supplications seemed answered when Percival Petter set up the National Union of Protestants. Petter and his twin brother Sir Ernest, had already won fame and fortune, by designing and building the first internal combustion motor-car in England. The National Union soon attracted a large membership of evangelical extremists intent on disrupting Anglican

services wherever Roman tendencies were suspected. Its secretary general, Rev W St Clair Taylor, however, did not belong to the Church of England where Percival Petter was a lay reader, but Taylor had a reputation as a fundamentalist Baptist preacher. In 1942 when the Protestant Union started, St Clair Taylor's sixteen-year-old nephew in Belfast, Ian Richard Kyle Paisley, felt called by the Lord to full-time ministry. His own father, the Rev Kyle Paisley, was also a fundamentalist Baptist like his friend the Rev Bernard Fidler, Principal of the Barry School of Evangelism in South Wales.

Ian Paisley's biographers, Ed Moloney and Andy Pollak wrote 'Fidler had broken with the mainstream Baptist Union because of its heretical "modernist" leanings. Under him, Barry was known for its fundamentalist theology, but even more for its emphasis on practical evangelism and the art of preaching.' On 16 September 1942 Paisley entered the Barry School for a one-year course in Hebrew, but had he wanted one in Welsh, French, Greek or Spanish the Rev Principal Fidler would personally have obliged. Moloney and Pollak write of Paisley at this time, 'he also acquired there a valuable training in the art of preaching to difficult and often hostile audiences; the tough dockers and navvies of Cardiff and Barry ports; the seamen who sailed into them; and the highly critical chapel congregations of the Welsh valleys. The latter were often less than happy when their preacher turned out to be a gangling teenager with an unfamiliar Ulster accent.'

Barry was where the young Paisley acquired his aggressive preaching style that served him later in politics as well as on Belfast's Custom House steps, because he learnt crowd control and the art of silencing hecklers with unanswerable retaliatory questions. In the taped series of his sermons called **This is my Life** Paisley tells of his time in Barry when a woman in a hostile crowd asked 'How do you know there is a Jesus Christ?' He recorded, 'There was a great shout of derision that went up from the crowd. And there was I, a mere stripling...and faced with a hostile crowd. I said to the Lord, "Lord, give me a weapon that will turn as a boomerang in the face of the Devil." And God gave me the answer. I said "Young woman, I come from Ireland, and an Irishman always answers a question by asking another..." "What's your question?" she said. I said "What Day is it?" And then the crowd laughed. She said "It's Sunday." I then asked "Could you tell me what month it is. She said it was the month of August. I said "I have only one more question. Can you tell me what year it is?" Then the crowd knew what I was getting at. They started to laugh and sneer at her. She said "It is 1942." I said "How could you get that number 1942 years from where? From where?" And she mumbled and stuttered. I said "I'll help you out. It is A.D., the year of our Lord. There is a Christ. And, young woman, when you take your diary out and you look at the year, the year stands as a living testimony that there is a Christ.'

Although the academic year did not start until September, Ian Paisley had been invited to preach to the Barry crowds during the summer vacation and to take a gospel caravan up into the Welsh valleys. Another student joined him in these activities, Dennis Parry, who would exert considerable influence over Paisley. Dennis Parry had been sent to Cardiff Prison rather than serve in the army or coalmines. On his release he shared the gospel caravan, and when term started, his bedroom with the sixteen-year old Ian Paisley.

The docks at Barry and Cardiff had been built by a Charles Wills, his brothers and Cory brothers-in-law, and their fellow ship-owners, for coal from their mines in the South Wales valleys had to be exported to the ever-expanding British Empire. Charles Wills's younger daughter Mary, was a doctor at the Shebeen Hospital in Egypt. Because Belfast was the port from which the seven young men had sailed in 1898 to found the Egypt General Mission, the Wills family took particular interest in the Irish students at the Barry School of Evangelism.

By the time Ian Paisley got home to Belfast in 1943 after his Hebrew course in Barry, I was fifteen years old and busy pounding my pestle and mortar by day at Richie's chemist's shop and being coached by Sammy Crooks at St Stephen's Rectory by night. In downtown Belfast German bombers had flattened an area that became known as 'Blitz Square' and which served as an additional open-air forum to the Custom House steps. Of course, being in Belfast, the forum's main topic of debate had to be 'personal salvation.' Ian Paisley invited his uncle, the Rev St Clair Taylor of Petter's National Union of Protestants, down to Blitz Square in a campaign to raise 50,000 new members for the society. Soon Paisley would replace Pastor Rea as the hell-fire preacher on the Ravenhill Road.

Neither the crowds at Blitz Square nor Paisley's preaching there enthralled me, but the Barry School of Evangelism was first suggested to me as a possible place of training by William Fulton, still on the look-out for recruits to the Egypt General Mission. Miss Josephine Farren had now moved to Elmwood Avenue and as she passed the fish-paste sandwiches to her lawyer and brother-in-the-Lord William Fulton and me she said I must set my sights on higher things than giving my testimony at the Custom House steps and the Bangor Convention. I must think of going to Keswick one day.

Every June gypsies took their dogs and caravans to the annual Horse Fair at Appleby in the Lake District to barter geldings and in-foal mares, drink and fight. So also the Faith Mission Pilgrims of Belfast and the Salvation Army majors of London's East End forsook soup kitchens for Keswick, centre of The Lakes, with its Big Tent Convention Week, to hear the great names of the evangelical world, Canon William Aldis, the Rev Harding Wood, Bishop Morris and the Rev Bernard Fidler. Canon Aldis had gone as

a missionary to Pao-Ning in China in 1898, the same year in which the seven young men had left Belfast to form the Egypt General Mission. Now Canon Aldis lived in England as the Home Director of the China Inland Mission and was the uncrowned king of evangelicals by virtue of being Chairman of the Keswick Convention, while his old colleague from China, Bishop Hind was home in Belfast as head of the Church Missionary Society and also having his fill of fish-paste sandwiches at Miss Farren's.

Although the Principal of the Barry School of Evangelism was a Baptist, namely the Rev Bernard Fidler, the school's premises had been bought for them by yet another evangelical lawyer, Frederick de Courcy-Hamilton, an Anglican who had founded three Navvy Missions in Barry which loyally adhered to the Book of Common Prayer. The Barry Convention planned for the summer of 1944 would be presided over by Canon Aldis surrounded by a galaxy of famous missionaries of various denominations from all over the world. Ian Paisley had gone early in 1942 before term started at the Barry School of Evangelism, and now, in 1944, I was invited to follow him, with promises from Mrs Charles Wills that my fees would be paid by her.

Principal Fidler had not only offered me a place but hoped I would also go before term started and help at the Barry Convention and afterwards take over from Dennis Parry at the caravan mission up in the Welsh hills. It had been Bishop Hind who had ordained Sammy Crooks, the curate at St Anne's Cathedral and my tutor, and so the tutor agreed that I should go to the Barry School as Ian Paisley had done, though years later in the 1980s it was Dean Crooks's cathedral which became the scene of ugly protests about sex orgies which Ian Paisley accused Pope Paul VI's clergy of attending.

But before I left Belfast in 1944 I became involved with a sex scandal which Paisley used to advance his own church. Apart from William Fulton's personal recommendation, the Barry School required two forms to be filled in about my spiritual background. I took one of these to be filled in by the Rev Ernest Stronge, the Presbyterian minister at Rasharkin who I had met the previous year at the Bangor Convention in County Down. Ernest was an extremely strict evangelical who, like Paisley, had been one of the first members of Petter's National Union of Protestants in Ulster. He married into the wealthy Wallace family which was also influential in the Orange Order and would in 1967 help to elect that other evangelical, Hellfire Jack Bryans, as the Imperial Grand Master.

I liked the Stronges and their children but felt there was some tension in my friendship since I had met Ernest with his sister at the Bangor Convention which Mrs Stronge had not attended. Then one day Ernest asked me to be a witness at the adoption of a boy aged three. The witnesses for the other side, or rather the Presbyterian minister and his witness, were the Rev

W R Rodgers the poet of Loughgall and Sidney Smith the artist. It was about this time that Sidney did his portrait of Bertie Rodgers reproduced in the 1951 book **The Arts in Ulster**. In view of what Sidney's wife and others have since told me about child sex abuse in Ireland during the 1940s, I now wonder if the adopted child was involved in it as Mrs Stronge made such a scene about the child when we returned to Rasharkin Manse. At any rate the Stronges' marriage was coming unstuck by the time I went to witness the adoption.

Soon there were stories of violence and sex scandals at the manse and Mrs Stronge left the house with the children who were forbidden to speak to their evil father when he passed them in the street. The congregation was also split about that rare thing in Presbyterian clergy circles of those days, divorce. When the case came up before Lord McDermott, the Lord Chief Justice and a pillar of the Presbyterian community, he was obliged to rebuke the numerous ministers in his courtroom for neglecting the spiritual welfare of their flock in order to gloat over the most outrageous sexual allegations. Ian Paisley claimed three-hundred of the Rasharkin congregation, led by Mrs Stronge's father, Daniel Wallace. This breakaway group went off to worship in one of Wallace's barns. Those who remained loyal to my friend Ernest called Paisley's new congregation 'The Barn Rats.' Lord Chief Justice McDermott's own name would come up years later in the High Court in London when the subject would be child sex abuse in Belfast.

I spent the night of my sixteenth birthday in April 1944 fire-watching above the draper's shop on the Newtownards Road while the streets below were full of some of the 120,000 US forces training for the Normandy landings. Travel between Ulster and mainland Britain was restricted to the movement of troops and to those on official business. William Fulton seemed to think a travel permit for me to cross to Barry might be obtained more easily in September in time for the new academic year.

I left Belfast to spend a week at Granshagh helping James Graham win the turf in the bog in June when a telegram arrived asking me to telephone William Fulton urgently. I raced across Skea bog to the telephone at Manley's saw-mill and heard that the authorities had assured William Fulton that I could have a travel permit in early July, just over a week away. But who were the authorities?

In 1932 when Jack Bryans married the Home Secretary's daughter Anne, the Secretary of State for Air was the Ulsterman, Lord Londonderry who had laid the foundation stone of the new St Simon's Church in Belfast on 9 July 1923 with two army friends from Donegall Avenue, John Gray and Richard Bryans in attendance. For fifty years Captain Gray was honorary treasurer of St Simon's and read the Roll of Honour at the Remembrance Day Service when I wore my grandfather's war medals. Richard Bryans had so

distinguished himself in the First World War with his knowledge of French and German that it was long suggested that his fellow Freemasons would send me to their college in Dublin where our curate, later archbishop, Alan Buchanan had been educated.

As Secretary for Air, the Marquess of Londonderry knew all about Jack and Max Bryans's new airline on which he travelled with his family, but it was the globe-trotting exploits of Lonsdale Bryans and his entrenched connections with the German Resistance in the early 1940s that particularly interested Londonderry.

Charles Londonderry had appropriately been made Secretary for Air since he flew as a hobby and would die as a result of a gliding accident. Like Lonsdale Bryans he had met the German leaders in the 1930s and Ribbentrop stayed at his home. Hitler anxiously felt that to save time his Deputy Führer Hess used his 'air vehicle' too often and for years, like Londonderry, Hess loved to pilot the planes as he did on 10 May 1941 when he flew to Scotland following the failure of the Lonsdale Bryans peace mission. Londonderry's private enthusiasm for flying spilled into public controversy when pacifists and Socialists bitterly attacked him for opposing the proposals of an international ban on aerial bombardment. Max Bryans wrote to me on 8 February 1986, 'Many thanks for your letter. It reminds me rather of those Italian marshalling yards onto which I used to direct out fighter-bombers at one period in the war.'

Lord Londonderry, Lonsdale Bryans and his cousins Jack and Max all got intensely involved in the design of ever faster aircraft, as did Hess who as early as the 1920s persuaded the publishers of the *Volkischer Beobachter* to use a Messerschmitt 25 with bold letters on the side advertising the newspaper, while Hess flew the plane. Several generations of the Bryans family were 'flying mad' and months after Londonderry's death resulting from a flying accident, his training ground appeared in a news item in *The Times* with the heading, 'Three killed in Air Crash,' the leader being Flying Officer S L Bryans.

Since 1923 John Lonsdale Bryans, senior, had been a canon of Brecon Cathedral not far from the Abergavenny hospital where Hess was a prisoner. On the other side of the town lay Llanover Castle, owned by a niece of Lord Londonderry, Lady Mary Herbert who as lady-in-waiting to the Queen was able to report on Hess's claims. The Barry School of Evangelism had not quite ended its academic year but because its students had dispersed into the Welsh valley for practical evangelism, I was asked to go as quickly as possible to Wales in order to take over the evangelising work at Llanover on Lady Mary Herbert's estate.

Before I left Belfast, William Fulton briefed me on the connection

between Llanover Castle and Lord Londonderry, the patron of St Simon's where I had been registered for nine years as a parish orphan. Fulton assured me that his 'praying partner' in South Wales, Mrs Mabel Wills, had not only been on her knees remembering me 'before the throne of grace' but also got out her cheque book. Apart from paying my fees for the first two terms at the Barry School of Evangelism, Mrs Wills had sent a cheque to the office of Cleaver, Fulton and Rankin for my travel expenses. It was Martin Cleaver, the senior partner in the firm of solicitors who had led the seven young men in 1898 to found the Egypt General Mission, and it was Dr Mary Wills who ran the Shebeen Hospital for the mission in 1944 at the time her mother was sending the cheque to Cleaver's partner, William Fulton.

So this was the life of faith I had heard about at so many missionary services, the faith actually being a matter of having friends and influence, and indulging in sex in Presbyterian manses and Orange Halls, or bribes in the form of half-crowns and sports jackets and other practical matters enjoyed with equal gusto by the saved and the unsaved, a life which involved cross-Border smuggling of wartime rationed goods.

In the 1930s 'Charley' Londonderry engaged a Belfast barrister, Montgomery Hyde, as his private secretary who in 1979 wrote their family history, stressing that the former Secretary for Air had not been 'too sympathetic to Germany.' Hyde's major books were about the Oscar Wilde circle and so thoroughly did he burrow into bedroom secrets that Lady Londonderry called him 'Montgomery the Mole.' He was therefore good material as an MI6 agent and later told the story of our mutual friends with me on television before libel lawyers were engaged. But in the war years one of the chief concerns for Montgomery Hyde while home on leave with his sister Diana, later my BBC producer, was getting whisky to go with the smuggled food.

By 1944 I had inevitably become an accomplished smuggler because the Free State Border lay so close to the Granshagh farm where I lived with James and Lizzie Graham, and for the more daring smuggling exploits I had seen coffins and fishing boats used. William Fulton read in *The Times* that the ban on travel from Northern Ireland, imposed because of the impending invasion, might be lifted the following month but only for legitimate cargo shipping. The resumption of passenger services would be only for those with permits and leave-passes like Montgomery Hyde, but the press did not say when. I had no need for such a pass until mid-September when the Barry school's term began, yet I got one in the first week of July to travel as soon as I wanted, or rather when the Rev Principal Fidler wanted me on the Llanover Castle estate.

After talking to William Fulton on Manley's saw-mill telephone I went back to Granshagh farm with the news of my impending departure for Barry

and all Lizzie Graham could think about, besides filling my trunk with the linen and clothes listed by the School of Evangelism prospectus, was for the pair of us to be away on our bicycles past Major Nixon's gentleman's residence at Belcoo and on into Blacklion across the Border to get sugar and tea for a really big *ceili* which the honour of the house demanded for anyone 'born for the big boat,' as we called people who emigrated.

Although I was preparing to go off to an ultra-Protestant institute in Barry, most of the friends celebrating at the farewell party were Irish Nationalists and Roman Catholics, led by Tom McGowan singing rebel songs such as **Kevin Barry**. In 1921 Charley Londonderry became Minister of Education in the new Government of Northern Ireland, a few months after the young Kevin Barry was hung by the British in Dublin. In 1964 the Government of Northern Ireland would celebrate my book *Ulster* with receptions in London and Belfast at which Kevin Barry's fellow Nationalist prisoners were honoured guests. In that book I described how Senator Jerry Lennon, the Nationalist spokesman in the peace talks, took me to see a window-sill in Dungannon where the young Kevin Barry carved his name before being hung. The same book opens with the story of the Egypt General Mission and how as the first stage of my journey to South Wales, William Fulton put me on a troopship in 1944, nearly fifty years after the seven young men sailed for Egypt.

In *Ulster* I also wrote of my meeting with Lord Brookeborough, the former Prime Minister who expressed regret at having got Anthony Blunt and his MI5 colleagues to give the Westminster government advice which put Cahir Healy in Brixton Prison in 1942, the year Alan Price, the protected Orangeman, should at the very least have been sent to Omagh asylum for his attacks on the ancient John Dowler's farm and young boys. Although Basil Brooke retired, his former secretary Alfred Arnold stayed on as a senior civil servant who remained popular with both Catholics and Protestants. And Alfred chose guests for official parties as expertly as he casted singers for his musicals.

The Catholic and Protestant press both came to the Belfast reception for my book to report on the guests, for Alfred knew who supported the ecumenical atmosphere of 1964. He was aware that our mutual friend from the 1930s, Edmond Warnock, had retired in 1956 from being Attorney General, although still remaining a Unionist politician and thorn in the flesh of Prime Minister O'Neill whose government was hosting my party. Warnock could certainly not be seen drinking with Roman Catholics, not even those I wrote about in my book simply because they were talented artists or peace-seeking priests. But Edmond Warnock got the nasty shock he deserved when he opened the leading Unionist evening newspaper, the **Belfast Telegraph**,

and saw both a photograph of his arch-enemy, the Catholic Nationalist MP, Father-of-the-House, Cahir Healy, reading my book, and a caption which ended, 'The third extract from the book will appear in the "Ulster Journey" series in the Belfast Telegraph to-morrow.' The newspaper not only serialised the book but sent a photographer to the Catholic and Protestant places and people I had written about but not illustrated.

Anthony Blunt and Peter Montgomery found particular interest in the press photographs of our mutual friends Konstanty and Ruth Scheunert taken at the beautiful island of Inish Rath in Lough Erne where we all loved to visit and discuss Konstanty's picture collection as well as 'The horrors of the war's barracks and prison-camps and the rape of his native Poland,' as I wrote in *Ulster*. By the time I reached London in July 1944, Lieutenant Konstanty Scheunert had become the Assistant Military Attache to the Polish Embassy and a few months later he married Ruth. Viscount Tredegar gave the Catholic couple a fantastic reception attended by Baroness Budberg and many of the other Russian spies. Nobody enjoyed a party so much as the Russians, White or Red, or as the Marquess of Londonderry still reigning over Londonderry House in Park lane and talking about Bryans Aero-Equipment at Mitcham and Rudolf Hess in Abergavenny.

The City of Dreadful Knights

To be on the troop-ship out of Belfast seemed some kind of miracle to me for neither poverty nor tuberculosis had carried me off like they did so many in the Belfast of the 1930s. We landed in Scotland and that first train journey to South Wales passed mostly in sleep but I could not forget the miles from Cardiff to Barry Dock. From further along the carriage music rolled in rich chords over the din of wheels, an angelic choir like I had never heard before. So this was Wales! I so far forgot my status as a missionary student as not to be shocked on learning alcohol and not religion prompted the singing whose tune I remembered though the words were Welsh. This choral prelude, echoing in my head, kept up my spirits on the last lap of the journey where, at the actual door of the Barry School of Evangelism, they sank.

Was my coming to Wales a mistake after all? In answer to my knock at the big double doors a little man stood before me, a kind of evangelical Ben Gunn, an appearance combined with the look of an off-duty undertaker caught in an apron over starched dickie and braces as he polished the horses' harness. Thinking him to be the caretaker I asked for the principal, the Rev Bernard Fidler, whose learned articles in the evangelical press had been given to me by Ian Paisley's father. But the little man twitched his drooping moustache. Then the learned principal, for it was he no less, apologised for his hand dirtied from staining a lecture-hall floor.

Belying his age Principal Fidler raced like Ben Gunn up the stairs with my luggage, got a lettuce and some radishes from the garden and made me tea with his fingers stained like a Moroccan woman's. 'How's Brother Paisley?' I was immediately asked. This would be a constantly recurring question during the next few years when my life centred around Barry. I heard nothing in all that time in South Wales but the greatest admiration for Ian Paisley, the founding member of the National Union of Protestants in Belfast.

On that first afternoon in Barry when I had helped the principal finish painting the floor he produced two ancient bicycles and we went off for a swim. I was happy enough to hum the choir tune from the train, whereupon my odd companion exclaimed, 'Ah! Crimond!' Before we left the beach he had taught me the first verse of the 23 Psalm in Welsh, the words sung earlier by the drunken choir on the train. I could never guess what this genius would get up to next. During the months ahead when Principal Fidler entered the lecture hall for prayers would he play the organ or piano? Which hymn-book would he use from among those compiled by himself and Principal Alexander

of the sister college in Geneva? Would we sing one of his translations from many languages, including a beautiful hymn composed in Welsh when he was a boy of twelve? Would we find on our desks stencil copies of passing tunes he had heard not two hours before, writing down the tune complete with piano part on wobbly stave lines drawn by himself?

But Bernard Fidler's musical fluency accompanied his facility in theological and historical subjects, including Hebrew and Greek. For a change on Sundays he liked nothing better than cycling miles in all weathers to some remote village where he would occupy the pulpit to those happiest speaking Welsh. He never asked students to peel potatoes or black-lead the kitchen range if he had time to do it himself, while only he could deal with his voluminous mail since he filed everything in his remarkable mind and could answer in French or Spanish as easily as in Welsh or English. Christ had been a carpenter and Principal Fidler delighted to mend chairs or teach his missionary students to solder pots.

But, genius notwithstanding, Fidler's character had cracks nothing could solder. Not surprisingly, he could not delegate his work and particularly not to the very proper Vice Principal, the Rev Edwin Dalling from Cambridge who wore a dog-collar and longed to see the dining-hall as a replica of that at King's College rather than the sparse affair where Principal Fidler personally counted out the prunes and watered the milk. And it was doubtful if King's College kept everyone's butter and margarine rations as they were at Barry, on top of Mrs Fidler's wardrobe for safety's sake. Although the place had been built as an hotel it boasted one bathroom only, a location on the ground floor consequently used by both staff and students in strict accordance with a rota which, like a mindless machine, allocated bath times in complete disregard of such lectures-in-progress as pastoral theology or homiletics. Thus students went in and out of lectures whenever their weekly quarter-of-an-hour in the bath came round, but only then for the four inches of lukewarm water up to the blue Plimsoll line painted in the bath by Principal Fidler. He had an uncanny ear for sounds other than music and even in the midst of a lecture on canon law would rush out to pound on the bathroom door if he heard the hot water running over time.

The school's treasurer was Miss Bessie Stephens, the Welsh poetess and heiress of Frederick de Courcy-Hamilton. In 1926 Bessie Stephens published her monumental work *The Eternal Quest* illustrated by de Courcy-Hamilton. On 8 September 1960 Miss Stephens wrote in *The Life of Faith* magazine, 'It is at Barry that the second chapter of this story opens, for near the mission where Mr Fidler ministered stood a roomy building, designed for a hotel, but never licensed, and now regarded as a white elephant. "They thought they were building a public house" Mr Fidler has been heard

to say, "but God knew they were building a Bible School!" And so it proved, for the unwanted property had somehow come into the hands of a Christian owner, and he had dreamed dreams and seen visions concerning it.'

The Christian owner was Frederick de Courcy-Hamilton who had earlier built the Luchana Navvy Mission where Bernard Fidler had been minister before becoming Principal of the Barry School of Evangelism. The rich lawyer, de Courcy-Hamilton went on holiday to Sweden and there fell in love with another house for which he dreamed dreams, and in her book **Observations** Winifred Graham, the popular novelist tells how he bought 'and had it rebuilt on Welsh soil. It was a proud moment when this bulky mass of mysterious luggage displayed its foreign charms in Celtic surroundings. The natives came from a distance to admire this unusual structure of which the owner was not a little proud.'

The natives who had dreamed dreams about a pub in the large hotel in Western Square did not come from a distance to admire the Barry School of Evangelism but laughed and said de Courcy-Hamilton only bought the hotel so that he could hang the surplus of his many pictures he painted so badly, because the walls of his Swedish house and the Luchana Navvy Mission were crammed full. On my arrival from Belfast Principal Fidler could see I was puzzled by the oil paintings which hung everywhere and he showed me a book by Miss Stephens which had one of the paintings as an illustration, as though to see it in printer's ink conferred fame on it. A name on which fame in evangelical circles had already been conferred was that of the de Courcy-Hamilton family.

In the school's annual report of 1960, Bessie Stephens wrote a memoir of Mrs Fidler who for long had been the school's matron, 'Born in Liverpool of Welsh parentage on July 16th, 1885, Mrs Fidler was brought up in a Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church. She was caught in the flame of the Revival of 1904-5 and ever looked back with joy to that wonderful period.' The wonderful period included meeting the rich Cardiff lawyer Frederick de Courcy-Hamilton and his brother known as 'The Admiral.'

Admiral de Courcy-Hamilton stood out prominently in the Welsh Revival of 1904. After retirement from the navy he became head of the London Fire Brigade and it is certain that he was not trying to make a joke when he declared at Revival Meetings, 'I want to see Wales on fire for God.' Leaving the flames of the Welsh Revival in order to resume his fire-prevention duties Admiral de Courcy-Hamilton and his family lived in Paddington and were delighted when the evangelical Rev Stanley Blunt became vicar of his parish church of St John the Evangelist in 1921. No one was more impressed by the striking admiral and his hellfire preaching than Anthony Blunt, the vicar's youngest son and friend for a time of the son of

another evangelical minister engaged in the de Courcy-Hamilton crusade in Wales, Goronwy Rees.

On 15 November 1979 Prime Minister Thatcher rose in the House of Commons and stated, 'The name which the Honourable Gentleman has given me is that of Sir Anthony Blunt. In April 1964, Sir Anthony Blunt admitted to the security authorities that he had been recruited by, and had acted as a talent-spotter for, Russian Intelligence before the war, when he was a don at Cambridge, and had passed information regularly to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Services between 1940 and 1945.'

There could be no denying **Private Eye's** earlier reports about Blunt in which material from Andrew Boyle and my letters to Peter Montgomery, was used to unmask the traitor. Boyle rushed out the paperback edition of his book **The Climate of Treason** which its cover describes as 'Completely revised with exclusive new material,' some of which Boyle got from his interviews and correspondence with myself. Subsequent books featuring the spy scandals, simply quoted Boyle, including his mistakes which doubtless resulted from the rush to get the paperback out.

On 26 December 1979 Boyle wrote to me, 'The first list of questions I promised to send may sound somewhat less than sophisticated to you. Here they are, all the same...Prince Chula is obviously the key contemporary through whom Blunt forged his prewar "Royal Connection" with Queen Mary.' Anthony Blunt and his friend from 1921 in Paddington but now Duke of Westminster in Fermanagh in 1979, must have thought Andrew Boyle as less than sophisticated to write in his book, in reference to the Cambridge milieu, 'The long-term value to Blunt of friendships such as those of Prince Chula and Peter Montgomery cannot be overestimated. Through the former he gradually became acquainted with members of the British Royal Family, and through the latter he forged an "Irish Connection" which endured.'

Boyle saw my copy of **The Twain Have Met** by Prince Chula Chakrabongse given to me by Miss Alice Pethybridge, the sister of Mrs Charles Wills who paid my fees at the Barry School of Evangelism. In the book Prince Chula not only discussed his Cambridge contemporaries but also his Cornish neighbours such as the 'happily married couple - John and Monica Pethybridge - who actually first met each other in our house.' Fifty years later the lawyer John Pethybridge still lives with his family in their Cornish house.

Boyle's book gained considerable prestige from the fact he had interviewed Goronwy Rees, the brilliant son of the Rev Richard Rees who spent most of his ministry as head of the Forward Movement in Cardiff. The interviews took place at a house overlooking the Thames at Strand-on-the-Green which belonged to Edward Armitage, a Cambridge-educated architect who had practised with a neighbour, Christopher Knight. When in London

during the late 1960s and 70s I stayed with the Armitage family and, while there, I often talked with Goronwy Rees about our Cardiff friends and how, from September to December 1965, Anthony Blunt had telephoned me every day, and sometimes twice a day while I stayed on Christopher Knight's houseboat, the **Blue Heron**.

Christopher Knight, like John Pethybridge, was a cousin of the Cardiff Pethybridges who, like Christopher, read my account in **The Protege** of my life with them in South Wales for five years from July 1944. By coincidence, the large house next to Christopher's river mooring at Chiswick did then, and still does, accommodate the Redcliffe Missionary Training College, the principal in 1944 when I first spoke there being a Miss Nash whose sister Irene served in the Egypt General Mission alongside Christopher's cousin Mary Wills. Christopher's elder brother Humphrey Knight married my actress friend from Belfast, Jean Hamilton who got a Hampstead specialist to take up the sad history of her niece who had been sexually abused by Sidney Smith, the girl's father. Since Jean's suicide and Sidney's death, Christopher and I have attended many High Court hearings with many documents concerning the people in high places who covered up the Kincora Boys Home sex scandal.

Goronwy Rees had a similar interest in my stay in South Wales, not simply because of his father's Forward Movement Mission there but for a reason that seemed more sinister to Goronwy. He believed that his downfall as Principal of the University College of Wales at Aberystwyth had been engineered by Guy Liddell, for as head of B Branch of MI5 Liddell used to go with Blunt and Burgess and others to the home of the Harris family. In this way Liddell had confirmation that what Goronwy Rees said openly in pubs about shady dealing in works of art, centred around Blunt and Harris was true. Although my letters from Dil de Rohan about the Harris family and works of art were stored by Dr Ruth Armitage at Strand-on-the-Green they were never disclosed to Goronwy during the five years he spent there as the tenant of Ruth's brother.

Guy Liddell's connection with a Cardiff family aroused Rees's curiosity so I borrowed from Christopher Knight a copy of unpublished memoirs by Edward Pethybridge who became a partner in the Dingley and Pethybridge Bank with headquarters in Launceston when he married Eliza Dingley on 9 September 1851. He added, 'The Rev Lethbridge was minister of St Stephen's and it was then that all the children of the Wills family became converted and joined our church. Mr Dingley and I also acquired the Mumpers Inn, kept by a Mrs Serpentilli, which was no ornament to West Gate Terrace. Mr Dingley also assisted in acquiring and closing the Ring-O'-Bells as a public house, and some of us also did the same thing with the Cornish Inn in West Gate Street.

In the Christian world I have seen marvellous advances. Holiness Conventions, the Salvation Army work all over the world, Free Church Council, the Students' Christian Mission the China Inland Mission, and now the great Welsh Revival, in which the prominent feature is the Revelation of the Infinite Love of God in the suffering and atoning death of Christ.'

The minister of the other Anglican church in Launceston was the Rev Thomas Walters and, as girls, before going to be 'finished' on the Continent, Mabel and Alice Pethybridge watched Rector Walters coming up the drive to tutor their brother Willie in Latin because he was going to be a lawyer. The girls would ask their mother if they could send an old pinafore or straw-hat to poor Minnie, the rector's daughter. That this same Minnie Walters became the Marchioness of Queensberry never ceased to amaze Mabel and Alice Pethybridge. But the world of the old Cornish gentry was further shaken when Minnie died and the marquis married a fishmonger's daughter from Cardiff. A steady flow of letters emanated from the former Minnie Walters, addressed to her long-standing friend and legal adviser Willie Pethybridge, and enclosing dreadful letters written to Minnie by her father-in-law Lord Queensberry who had put Oscar Wilde in the dock.

All three Pethybridge offspring were well established in South Wales when the 'great Welsh Revival' of 1904, which their Uncle Edward wrote about, filled the Navy Missions of Barry founded by their friend Frederick de Courcy-Hamilton, although anybody could be forgiven for noting that there was also, simultaneously, a great revival of family fortunes. Charles Wills was one of those who had 'become converted and joined our church.' When he and his brother developed the dry docks in Barry, Mabel Pethybridge joined him in holy matrimony on condition it was a dry wedding.

Charles and Mabel Wills vigorously applied their evangelical zeal in South Wales together with the rigour of their hatred for alcohol. Just as Uncle Edward and his friends had seen to the revocation of pub licences in Launceston, so now their rich relations and friends found it important to add 'JP' as well as 'MP' after their names so that they could keep the demon drink not only out of their homes but also out of those streets of houses they were busy putting up for the navvies at work on the railways and docks.

The God of all these ship, dock, railway and mine owners certainly sat firmly enthroned in his heaven. There could be no better proof of this than their own ever-multiplying prosperity. Yet all was not well in this world flush with the great Welsh Revival. Winifred Graham married Theodore Cory of Cardiff and during the Second World War the pair went to live with a relative, Sir Clifford Cory, JP, DL, MP, President of the Monmouthshire and South Wales Coal Owners Association, at his stately Llantarnam Abbey, 'he was extremely Low Church, no flowers were ever allowed on the altar and

certainly not a cross. Even our Book of Common Prayer had to be modified, the words "Holy Catholic Church" being changed to "Anglican Church" since the word Catholic was taboo.' Principal Fidler and his students from the Barry School of Evangelism were the favourite preachers at Sir Clifford's private chapel.

Mabel Wills was delighted when a relation of Rector Lethbridge of St Stephen's, Launceston, called Anne Lethbridge, married Sir Clifford Cory whose father John Cory had not only been one of the promoters of the Barry Docks and Railways but had also presented to Cardiff the great Memorial Hall for its united temperance societies. When it became known that Lady Anne was serving the demon drink at her London musical evenings at 28 Belgrave Square, Sir Clifford quickly got a legal separation, though without the divorce which, while it would have freed them, would have been contrary to their strict evangelical principles. Thus Anne's true love could never marry her, even if he had wanted to put up a front for his homosexuality. This was Mabel's brother, Willie Pethybridge. He was much in demand for after-dinner speeches in political circles and was an intimate of Lloyd George and for many years ran Liberal affairs in Cardiff where he became Lord Mayor in 1925. If Willie knew about Lloyd George's affairs with women, the Prime Minister knew Willie was not only homosexual, filling Lady Cory's parties with his favourites such as Guy Liddell but also knew as a Liberal lawyer, Willie could keep scandals out of the courts.

The Pethybridges and Lethbridges had grown up in Liberal homes when William Gladstone was 'The Grand Old Man' of the House of Commons. They were delighted when his Foreign Secretary, Lord Rosebery, made the Marquess of Queensberry's eldest son, Lord Drumlanrig, his private secretary and recommended him for an English peerage in order to speak in the House of Lords, since Scottish peers did not automatically sit in the Lords. Lord Queensberry was outraged and followed the Foreign Secretary to Hamburg in order to horsewhip him for showing undue attention to his eldest son and heir. This was only stopped when the Prince of Wales intervened.

When Oscar Wilde came up before Mr Justice Wills great care had to be taken that letters from Lord Queensberry should not be seen by the jury since they contained damaging allegations about Lord Rosebery and Maurice Schwabe, nephew of the wife of the Solicitor General. Even Queensberry agreed to this because, shortly before Wilde's trial, Queensberry's eldest son and heir to the Scottish estates had been found shot dead in a Somerset field with his own gun by his side, but did he shoot himself or was he shot? Lord Drumlanrig had, before the shooting, been given a post in Gladstone's government thanks to his old admirer Lord Roseberry, the Foreign Secretary. Willie Pethybridge was fully briefed in the homosexual affair since he too had

taken Rosebery's fancy. In his next case involving a Prime Minister, namely Lloyd George, the Liberal Lord Mayor of Cardiff, Willie Pethybridge, had to deal with a homosexual whose sale of honours for the Liberal Party purse could not be so easily hushed up. Despite the great Cory Hall and Navy Missions erected for temperance societies, Cardiff under Willie Pethybridge became known as 'The City of Dreadful Knights.'

When Willie Pethybridge came to examine affairs about who was paying what for a peerage or a baronetcy through the offices of Maundy Gregory, Willie stayed with his old friend Anne Cory at 28 Belgrave Square. The MP for Cardiff before Mrs Charles Wills's brother-in-law, Sir Herbert Cory, was Ivor Guest who left Wales to become Lord Wimborne and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Lord Wimborne had less influence on affairs in Ireland than his mother who started the Lady Wimborne Protestant League which plagued the High Churches started by the Duke of Newcastle's family.

Lord Wimborne was the head of the Guest family that made as vast a fortune from South Wales steel mills as the Cory and Wills family made out of coalmines and shipping. They were deeply committed to Lloyd George's Liberal Party as was Lady Wimborne's nephew, Winston Churchill who was well acquainted with Willie Pethybridge's City of Dreadful Knights. Churchill's secretary and friend, Sir Edward Marsh had been elected to the Apostles Society at Cambridge in 1894 and it was then as homosexual as in May 1928 when Anthony Blunt joined. Blunt knew his masters in Moscow were concerned that apart from selling honours for the Liberal Party, Maundy Gregory and his homosexual friends Willie Pethybridge and Eddie Marsh also supported the Free Ukraine campaign that hoped to set Prince Danylo Skoropadsky up as Hetman of the Ukraine.

Anthony Blunt was always delighted to accompany his mother to a recital at 28 Belgrave Square especially if her son Wilfrid, a professional singer, performed lieder by Schubert and Schumann, or Guy Liddell astonished even professional musicians by playing his cello in the old 'gamba stance' a method that has now become standard for authentic Baroque string playing. Liddell was very proud of the fact that a member of his family had been the original model for *Alice in Wonderland*, by Lewis Carroll, Alice Liddell, the daughter of the Dean of Christchurch, Oxford, whose son Edward married Minnie Cory of Cardiff in 1876.

But both Blunt and Liddell had reasons other than music and spying on the Free Ukraine campaigners, when they attended Lady Cory's drawing-room concerts. Winifred Graham puzzled many of her friends, including Anthony Blunt and his mother, by her portrait of Lady Anne Cory in *Observations* where, along with details of Queen Victoria's clothes at 28 Belgrave Square, she noted that Anne and 'Kreisler are the greatest of friends.'

But Lady Cory herself always insisted that her greatest friends were, in fact, her dogs, and there is no mention of them in **Observations**. When Lady Wimborne died Anne Cory heavily financed the Protestant Truth Society yet her real heart was in being President of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. There is no evidence that the diminutive Lady Cory ever did battle to remove crucifixes from High Churches but there are lively accounts of her assaulting the drivers of heavy brewery drays for making their horses overstrain up hills.

However, another author got the animal connection right. Through his book **God is my Adventure** the Polish artist Rom Landau reached a wider public than through his work as a sculptor. His biography of Lady Cory's piano teacher Paderewski endeared Rom Landau to her and when he came to write of 'Georgian Hostesses' in his autobiography he tells how he was invited to tea at 28 Belgrave Square and told to bring his doggie friends. Landau sets the scene for the numerous musical evenings when the violinist Kreisler would perform, 'The evening would begin at eight-thirty with a dinner to which as many as thirty would sit down, among them, possibly, the Prime Minister with his wife. Soon after ten other guests would begin to arrive, and some of the great names in politics, society, finance, diplomacy and the arts, would be there. When all the guests were assembled the great virtuoso began his recital in the large drawing-room on the first floor. Round about midnight there would be supper for a hundred to two hundred guests, and Lady Cory would trip proudly from one group to another.'

Guy Liddell had known from childhood many of the guests, especially members of the royal family since his grandfather had been a Groom-in-Waiting to Queen Victoria and Deputy Ranger of Windsor Great Park, and his son, Guy's father, became Comptroller and Treasurer to Queen Victoria's daughter and son-in-law, Prince and Princess Christian in 1915. With or without his cello Guy was a most welcome guest at 28 Belgrave Square.

Lady Anne Cory loved to go and have afternoon tea with Mrs Hilda Blunt at St John's Vicarage in Paddington since they could indulge there the favourite topics of royalty and homosexuality. Wilfrid Blunt wrote, 'Had one of us wanted to marry unsuitably - a Negress, say, or far worse, a "pervert" (by which she (Hilda Blunt) meant a Protestant who has "gone over to Rome") - she would have registered her regret.' Both Anne Cory and Hilda Blunt had been friends of the big jolly Princess Mary Adelaide of Cambridge, wife of the Duke of Teck and mother of the future Queen Mary. She had been an easy catch for the evangelical net but so generous with money for charities that the family had to leave their Richmond friends, Mrs Blunt's parents and sisters, and move to a hotel in Florence.

All these matters would be gathered together when the present Queen

commissioned Anthony Blunt's friend James Pope-Hennessy to write the official biography of her grandmother, Queen Mary, while the Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures gathered all his family's letters from Queen Mary and her parents. Pope-Hennessy signed the 'Author's Note- Hagnau-am-Bodensee; Abbey Leix, Ireland; Villa Isolana, Lido-Venezia; Hotel Schwan, Gmunden; 9 Ladbroke Grove, London - January 1956 - February 1959.'

Abbey Leix was the home of Lady de Vesci, mother of Bridget Parsons and younger sister of Adeline de la Feld who arrived from Canada to spend many weeks at the abbey as part of her two-year visit to Europe which coincided with Pope-Hennessy's own stay at the abbey. Adeline wrote to me from the abbey and I kept not only those letters but others she received while there from people whom we both knew. Anthony Blunt and his mother, as well as various authors, were well aware when they went to 28 Belgrave Square that Lady Cory was a great collector of royal letters in addition to Queen Victoria's knickers and dresses. Subsequently, some people would be quite misled about what actually took place when Queen Mary wanted to get hold of certain family letters and I became involved in their retrieval. Adeline and I pointed out to James Pope-Hennessy letters written by Queen Mary herself in which she described being hard-up as a girl in Italy.

Pope-Hennessy may well have offended Blunt and his family by not using any of the royal letters Blunt's family had received, but by the late 1950s the royal biographer knew, as Adeline and I did, that it would only be a matter of time before Blunt would be cornered and forced to confess to the security services about his career as a Russian spy. Of Lady Cory's family Pope-Hennessy wrote, 'Mr Peter Wells who had paid the Tecks' debts in Florence...Mr Peter Wells with his Italian valet, Arcangelo...Mr Wells was a rich and popular old widower, who spent the winter months in Florence where his only aim was to attend as many parties each day and night as he possibly could. He had known Princess Mary Adelaide as a girl, and his wife, a Lethbridge, now long dead, had gone to her first ball at Cambridge House. He was a benevolent old egoist, with silvery hair and a clean-shaven contented countenance, an elderly beau whose manners bewitched every lady he met.'

At home in England Peter Wells was Uncle Peter to Lady Anne Cory, nee Lethbridge, and Forest Farm, his beautiful home in Windsor Forest, would be bought by the Duke of Newcastle. Guy Liddell knew Forest Farm as a favourite watering-hole from the days when his father was in the service of Princess Christian. Queen Mary as well as Anthony Blunt knew the nature of Adeline's writing against Mussolini but it was only after Queen Mary's granddaughter Princess Margaret went to stay with Adeline's sister, Lady de Vesci, that Adeline's work for Communist publishers was destroyed.

It was a sad day for Mrs Blunt and Lady Cory when they followed

Admiral de Courcy-Hamilton's coffin to Hampstead cemetery, for he had been as fearless as Lady Wimborne in attacking 'the perverts' wherever he found them, but particularly in Wales where miners went to the pits singing hymns during the Revival of 1904. That headlong Protestant awakening had greatly disturbed the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Vaughan, since his family were the famous Vaughans of Courtfield, Ross-on-Wye, and were lords of the manors of Ruardean and Welsh Bicknor. Nevertheless, the cardinal found some consolation in the fact that he had many brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces to become priests and nuns all over the world to offset the Protestant Revival, especially in Wales.

On 3 March 1908 Florence Lister-Kaye married the cardinal's nephew and head of the Vaughan family, Colonel Charles, and so became chatelaine of Courtfield, though not a very happy one. Her sister Adeline wrote in *My Zapiski* about the whole family going to Rome for another, earlier wedding, that of their cousin, Princess Orieta Doria, 'Now, two days after the bridal couple left for their honeymoon, my sister, characteristically as I thought, since the bride had been the centre of interest and attention, felt herself overlooked, burst into her mother's room in the early morning in a state of religious hysteria and announced that she had decided to become a Roman Catholic. The shock to my mother was so stunning, so unbelievable that she was literally struck dumb. When she slowly realised the import of what had been said- what she dreaded to hear - for the first time in her life that I am aware of, she lost her inviolable self-control and broke down in a flood, a torrent of weeping, continuing almost unceasing for two days. I was deeply distressed to see her sobbing in the throes of such uncontrollable grief. Unreasonable as it seemed, I reflected perhaps real, deep grief is unreasonable. I was dismayed that an announcement of this kind could cause such deep grief. Had Florence declared her intention of becoming a Buddhist I would have laughed and remarked; "she's not getting enough attention." Except to the extent that it afflicted my mother I was equally unmoved by her decision to become a Roman.

Not one single member of this pious group, her mother, sister, or the erring daughter ever went to her room to try and console my poor mother and show a little love. She went to live with her grandmother in an odour of incense and adulation, almost a martyr, and neither of them did a thing to lessen the blow to my mother of the sorrow this separation from her daughter caused her. The crass stupidity of it all exasperated me. Once the deed was done and she was safely lodged in the Roman fold surely some act of reconciliation could have been attempted, and which my mother so longed for and would have welcomed. A year or two later a marriage was arranged with a man of a well-known R.C. family and a big wedding was put on at

Westminster Cathedral by my grandmother. Neither parents nor I were invited. To conclude and dismiss this melancholy episode, when my grandmother died she left me out of her Will. She never forgave me for taking my mother's part.'

The grandmother, who was then the Dowager Duchess of Newcastle and heiress of the Hope fortune, invited the Vaughan friends and neighbours, including Lord and Lady Tredegar and their fifteen-year old son Evan. It was almost as if the Byzantine splendour of Cardinal Vaughan's Westminster Cathedral had been specially designed as a setting for the various papal robes that Evan would later wear in it. But for the moment Evan and his family derived great satisfaction to hear their many miners singing 'Onward Christian Soldiers' as they went to the extensive Tredegar coalmines.

Cardinal Vaughan's other nephew Francis became rector of St Helen's Barry Dock before becoming Bishop of Menevia in 1926, but this was a thorn in the flesh that could be borne because Mr and Mrs Charles Wills and their evangelical followers could praise the Lord that Canon Henry Stewart was Rector of Porthkerry. Lanson House where Charles and Mabel Wills lived with their son Vernon and two daughters Sylvia and Mary, had been built on a road leading to the Pebble Beach at Cold Knapp, noted not only for its curious geological formation but also for the way the beach fell with such alarming steepness into the water. Here that well known swimmer, Evan Tredegar, had taught all three Wills children to swim before Evan and Vernon Wills went to the Great War as soldiers. The far end of the beach was called 'The Golden Stairs' and led on to a valley still today in its natural state except for two monuments, one to man's concern for money, and the other to his concern with the soul.

The money one had been constructed by Charles Wills and his colleagues. They not only undertook the remarkable engineering feat of making new entrance locks to Barry harbour, which has one of the world's highest tide rises of over 40 ft, but they also constructed vast railway viaducts to bring coal from family mines in the Rhondda and other valleys further east to the new docks. The most impressive of these structures strode across Porthkerry Park, beyond the second monument, the soul one, namely the ancient church of St Curig, the 6th century bishop. Evan Tredegar's ocean-going yacht had taken him to live in many romantic places in the East, but he loved this valley, which is still untouched and frequented by naturalists even in the 1990s.

Canon Stewart had married the Earl of Southesk's daughter, Lady Beatrice whose sister was Evan's mother. Evan and his strange sister Gwyneth loved coming over to Barry to swim with their Stewart cousins and the Wills children. All became 'saved' in the aftermath of the great Welsh

Revival when Frederick and Admiral de Courcy-Hamilton stirred the embers of emotion. But although Frederick de Courcy-Hamilton remained an unemotional lawyer, sufficient feeling survived for him to be horrified on hearing that Evan had introduced Vernon Wills to black magic rites in his uncle Canon Stewart's ancient church at Porthkerry Woods, when the young Vernon not only drank from a human skull but had been asked to supply the semen for the communion cup.

No legal action could be taken against Evan since it was Vernon's 'saved' uncle, Alderman Willie Pethbridge, the Liberal Leader in Cardiff City Hall, who had first buggered Evan. Fortunately for the parties concerned, Mr Justice Wills, a relation, had not heard evidence from Lord Alfred Douglas and Willie Pethbridge concerning friendships with Foreign Secretary, Lord Rosebery, when Oscar Wilde was tried, but there was no stopping Evan from parading his friend Lord Alfred all over the place, except in Charles Wills's Lanson House where the dreadful letters written by Bosie's father Lord Queensberry to his daughter-in-law, the former Minnie Walters were kept in the safe.

It came as no surprise to Lanson House when Evan followed Bosie Douglas and Mrs Vaughan of Courtfield into the Church of Rome. There were too many books and newspaper articles about Evan's involvement with both Rome and the black mass for him to disguise the facts. In any case, he relished being known as the Playboy Poet. Had not his hero and look-alike, Percy Bysshe Shelley, who lived in Wales between 1811 and 1813, not also shocked the neighbours with his odd life style? At his Carnarvonshire home Shelley narrowly escaped assassination from three pistol shots which he afterwards claimed were fired by the Devil himself. In fact, a local shepherd, Robin Pant Evan, was responsible, since he was outraged by the way Shelley killed sheep. Were these the dying or diseased sheep that Shelley claimed he wanted to put out of their misery? Or did Shelley want hot blood to mix with wine to drink from human skulls, as his lookalike Evan Tredegar did quite openly in front of his famous visitors?

Evan invited other poets than Dylan Thomas to sherry and princesses. The Irish Nationalist, Shane Leslie, wrote of his 'Recurrent visits to Tredegar in Monmouthshire...and we regularly attended his oddly mixed parties. H.G. Wells for some reason was a constant guest and the most interesting to talk with. The English Jules Verne has proved a prophet. He had once served in a Windsor drapers.' In *How Do You Do?*, Dil de Rohan described life with Mary Oliver at Pembroke Lodge where 'Moura Budberg and H.G. Wells came very often.' The former Windsor draper's assistant, Wells, certainly did not allow his socialism to interfere with his sherry and princesses.

After Bridget Parsons refused to marry into the House of Windsor, she

and Prince George nevertheless continued going to Lady Cunard's where Evan Tredegar was sufficiently popular for Lady Cunard to take her friends for weekends at Tredegar Park. The present Duke of Bedford went, but assures the readers of his autobiography, 'I was taken there, I add hastily, by Lady Cunard.' I hasten to add that in my experience, the poets and historians who went to sherry and princesses with Evan were willing prisoners of Evan's charm and black magic, just as the able-bodied seamen from the East End and Barry Docks willingly went for the new bank notes and the 'old one-two' of flagellation.

Bridget Parsons had a reluctance similar to the Duke of Bedford's about going to Wales. She thought her Aunt Flo, Mrs Vaughan of Courtfield, was too enmeshed in Evan's papal affairs, even though this seemed inevitable since Colonel Vaughan, like Evan, was also a private chamberlain to the Pope, while both men sat on the bench as JPs for Monmouthshire. Many people complained about the Caravan Mission to Wales run by Principal Fidler of the Barry School of Evangelism, a number of whose students, including Dennis Parry, had been sent to prison or down the Tredegar pits as conscientious objectors. Mrs Vaughan conscientiously objected to Dennis Parry following her into St Helen's, Barry Dock, and other Catholic churches and blowing out the candles she had lit and littering the pews with gospel tracts written by Percival Petter of the National Union of Protestants.

On 9 October 1987, James Lees-Milne wrote to me, 'Poor Bridget, she became impossible towards the end...I remember her speaking then uncharitably about one of her aunts, perhaps Mrs Vaughan.' Although Flo Vaughan received one of the largest slices of Thomas Hope's diamond fortune when she married the rich owner of Courtfield in 1908, fifty years later she was a widow and in debt form having given too much of her wealth for priests in Wales trying to fight the Protestantism spread by the Barry School of Evangelism.

Goronwy Rees tells of other dangers, both to the Catholic Vaughans and Tredegars and to the Protestant Corys and Willses who owned coalmines and shipyards. In *A Chapter of Accidents* Rees writes 'It was not in Jesus but in Mr A.J. Cook that the miners hoped to find a saviour; though in the agony of the miners' strike that followed the General Strike of 1926, he hardly proved to be any more effective. Until that time, indeed, I was hardly aware of the circumstances under which my father laboured to bring the light of the Gospel into the valleys...But now he left the house every morning like any business man for his office in the centre of Cardiff, from which he administered the affairs of the fifty or so mission halls which were under his care, or travelled up and down the valleys to visit them.'

Sir Clifford Cory in Llantarnam Abbey as much as Lord Tredegar amid

the kangaroos of his stately park were deeply shaken by the miners' strike and the springing up of leaders such as the bold Aneurin Bevan who had the votes and trust of the people of Tredegar town. And many saw Principal Fidler as a better man to fight socialism than Lord Tredegar running around in gorgeous papal uniforms while the children of Tredegar's terrace houses went barefoot to school. Furthermore, Pastor Fidler, as he was known internationally, was in league with Principal Alexander of Geneva in trying to get their friend Martin Niemöller, founder of the Pastors' Union, released from the concentration camp where Hitler had put him in 1937 when Archdeacon Sharp was taking Evan's friends to Hitler Youth rallies and orgies. Now that the Liberal Party's day of power were over, the Tories must unite to fight the godless Socialists who left their Forward Mission halls and went instead to working men's clubs where the demon drink was served and they sang the Red Flag.

Mrs Charles Vaughan of Courtfield knew only too well that it was her sister Adeline de la Feld who had filled Sylvia Pankhurst's Communist magazine with such passionate writing against Mussolini, and now there was a war in which Britain was fighting alongside godless Russia. Mrs Vaughan died in October 1961, and her other sister Lady de Vesci notified Adeline immediately. Adeline wrote, 'Dear Lois, Thanks for sending the telegram. It was a shock so soon after the letter saying it might be weeks or months. Still poor Flo - it was the better way. For years she had driven herself into a state of exhaustion that left her no reserve of strength. She was also profoundly unhappy and had nothing to live for. Her religious beliefs and everything that had gone before made a barrier between us and I did not realise how terribly unhappy she was, until her last letter to me, written to thank me for the cheque I sent her, she said that when she opened the letter and saw the cheque she cried. This showed that after all the unkindness she had learnt to bear and put up with, this kind thought on my part moved her to tears. I am so thankful to think that I did it in time, and not too late as usual.'

It had been one of my pleasures in life to bring the two sisters, Adeline and Flo, together, after such a long separation caused by Mrs Vaughan's conversion to Catholicism in 1905. Ironically that meeting only came about because I went in July 1944 to the extreme-Protestant Barry School of Evangelism, so detested by Flo Vaughan. But on that Saturday of my arrival in Barry, I was full of curiosity about who had sent the cheques to Pastor Fidler for my fees and to William Fulton's Belfast office for my journey to Wales.

With his sister dead and his mother content to sit on a human-sized bird's nest imagining herself to be a bluetit one day and a magpie the next, Evan Tredegar spent long periods away in Rome, Paris or on his yacht. During these absences from Wales, Major Ware controlled Evan's affairs and estate

interests, while Katie Stewart and her brothers represented him socially. Mrs Wills had stated in 1896 the Christian Alliance for Women and Girls in Barry and for many years Katie Stewart was her unpaid assistant. At the same time Katie was more than merely a kissing-cousin to Evan since he regarded her modest house as his home. She knew he was homosexual and that Winston Churchill had been obliged to put Evan's companion, Lord Alfred Douglas, in prison over libel. Although Katie featured so prominently in Barry's evangelical circle, she nevertheless tolerated Evan's weird tastes in religion and sex. Katie's particular friend had been her cousin Gwyneth, Evan's only sister and when she died tragically in 1924 at the age of 29, Katie drew close to Evan because of their common grief over the wild Gwyneth.

On my first night at Barry before I fell asleep tired but excited by the day-long journey somebody knocked at my bedroom door and without waiting for an answer Dennis Parry burst in shaking my hand, asking about his friend Ian Paisley, telling me about the gospel caravan La Roc he had left to attend the Barry Convention, and assuring me of the many prayers that had gone up on my behalf to bring me out of Catholic darkness in Ireland to Bible light in Wales. Dennis knelt by my bed and from time to time closed his eyes offered up prayers of thanksgiving for the Lord's answers to the prayers of my well-intentioned but unknown brothers and sisters in Barry. In a non-stop outpouring Dennis told me of the world's wicked ways in Wales which had put him in Cardiff Prison for being a conscientious objector while the ungodly prospered and prominent Roman Catholics lorded it in Tredegar Park and Courtfield.

Hardly pausing for breath he promised that tomorrow, at the Barry Island open-air service, he would introduce me to Vernon Wills who had been bewitched when a boy by the wicked Lord Tredegar who went to bed with a witch's skeleton and owned half of Wales. Warming to his subject, Dennis also promised to introduce me to Vernon's aunt, Miss Alice Pethybridge, who had helped to get Dennis released from prison. She was an old lady now but had seen, with her very own born-again eyes, the wicked Lord Tredegar and his guests drink from human skulls wine that was said to be mixed with human blood. And it was no secret that one of Tredegar's fellow Satanists was Brendan Bracken, the Minister of Information, who was filling the Church of England with 'cuckoos in the nest.'

Percival Petter had not only written the book **Guilty Clergy** but also many satirical verses which the National Union of Protestants used as Gospel tracts, such as **Cuckoo in the Nest**, which exposed High Church clergy in the Anglican community. Dennis knew, as did many in authority, that Brendan Bracken was an Irish Roman Catholic and, as such, not a fit person to be a cabinet minister, let alone to be responsible for the appointment of deans and

bishops in a Protestant Church. Dennis gloated in the fact that Petter's tracts upset Lord Tredegar, an artist and poet, because the drawing to **Cuckoo in the Nest** showed a camp priest in biretta and lots of lace sitting in a human-sized nest not unlike the way Evan's mother did, and nobody, not even her beloved niece, Katie Stewart, could deny the fact that the Dowager Lady Tredegar was quite cuckoo as she sat at home in Grosvenor Square in her large nest.

Dennis Parry entered the Barry School in 1942 a term before his friend Ian Paisley and in the autumn of 1944 set sail for missionary service with the Unevangelised Fields Mission to the Congo where he, his wife and two of their children were murdered in 1964. The Barry School's rich patrons included a Mrs Margaret Turner who had been a fellow-deaconess with Mrs Fidler in London before their marriages. She appeared in my book **The Protege** which featured my experiences in Barry and which I started writing in 1961 when Dennis came home on furlough from the Congo. As Mrs Turner had been helping the Parry family financially since 1944, Dennis always made a point of seeing her when home on leave in order to collect his next cheque.

It was Mrs Turner who told me that some months after their return to the Congo and its political turmoil Dennis was killed. I accordingly wrote in **The Protege** that even in 1944 when Dennis and I were together on the gospel caravan he had 'a penchant for martyrdom.' I also said that on his income tax returns he entered 'Faith' as the source of his income, which indeed was perfectly true because he had enough faith in Mrs Turner's cheques to know they would never bounce, although that, of course, was not what he had meant on the tax forms. By the time my book was published in 1963, Mrs Turner had discovered that Dennis had survived the attack by Simba tribesmen who in fact murdered a Catholic priest, but it was only when I got the Barry School's 1965 annual report that I read, 'It was in the last days of 1964 that it became apparent that Mr Dennis Parry and his wife Nora and their two youngest children had become victims of the fearful massacre by the Congo rebels.'

Since both Mrs Vaughan and Lord Tredegar had employed agents to collect evidence of Dennis Parry destroying or defacing statues in Welsh Catholic churches during the 1940s I think it remarkable that today a bust of Dennis stands in Ian Paisley's Martyrs Memorial Church in Belfast alongside others of Luther and Calvin.

Before I fell asleep on my first night at the Barry School, Dennis asked me with more than a little self-interest, if I had got the money alright for my travel expenses. Bringing me from Belfast had been cheap compared with what it would cost to send him to the Congo in a few weeks' time. He was totally confident that faith would pay for his journey to the Congo, but there was no harm in checking up in any case, just to be sure that the Lord was

indeed still providing. By now Charles Wills and his brother-in-law Sir Herbert Cory, the Cardiff MP, were dead, but not only was their friend and brother-in-Christ, Lord Leathers, still alive as chairman of William Cory and Son but also as Minister of War Transport in Mr Churchill's government, so a little word of prayer followed by a word in Lord Leathers's evangelical ear produced another act of faith.

From what Dennis and Principal Fidler told me on that first day about my fees and travel expenses I realised that my fees had been paid twice, by Mrs Wills and also by Mrs Dalling, the Vice Principal's wife. Later I found out that my travel had been paid for by Katie Stewart whose income derived mainly from her cousin Evan Tredegar's 40,000 Welsh acres rich in coal seams and his slums in London's East End. Like William Fulton in Belfast, Mrs Wills in Barry was always on the lookout for another missionary to help run her daughter's hospital with the Egypt General Mission, and the lawyer wrote that I was a red-hot brand saved from the evils of Spiritualism which formed the core of my testimony of saving grace. It also formed the core of Evan's reason for wanting to meet me when told this by Katie Stewart, for Evan was also always on the lookout, not for missionaries but for communicants in the black mass. I had, it seemed, something to offer everyone.

Within twenty-four hours of installing myself at the Barry School I had spoken for the Lord above at the Sailors' Rest and also at the big sanatorium at Sully where my talk was relayed to the wards of patients too ill to come to the main hall. I did not know until later that Mrs Wills and her C.A.W.G. assistant, Miss Stewart, were visiting one of these wards and listened as if eavesdropping on 'the new Irish student.' At the open-air service on the sands of Barry Island in the evening I saw a man helping Dennis to carry a portable harmonium. His eyes were not unlike organ stops and stared like Lord Kitchener's in the famous poster 'Your Country Needs You.' He wore a hard billycock hat and although it was a warm July night, wore mittens which did not conceal the fact that his fingernails were bitten to the quicks.

The general effect of Vernon Wills looking like a scarecrow, however, derived from his bulging pockets, though only later did I find out that in order to get talking to people about their souls, Vernon Wills had become a Betterwear salesman, and kept all his business papers in his pockets to stop his sister Sylvia blocking the lavatory with them. Vernon treated me like a long-lost brother and asked the by now normal questions about Brother Paisley.

In an obituary of Dennis Parry, one of our mutual Barry friends, Margery Thomas, then the school secretary, wrote, 'If Dennis was missing he was usually found witnessing to service men or civilians in the precincts of the Bible School or further afield distributing Scriptures on the ships berthed

at Barry Docks. Even in his student days he was entrusted with suffering, in that he served a period in Cardiff Prison for being a conscientious objector.'

A large Bible depot and shop was attached to the school for dispensing the Scriptures in more than forty languages. Soon Dennis set about training me to distribute this material on board Greek or Portuguese or other ships. Mrs Fidler, the school matron, ran the Bible depot and welcomed us back with beaming smiles if Dennis and I returned laden with butter and spam, jam or chocolate from the American Liberty ships. Although strictly illegal, nobody felt guilty about boosting the meagre official rations and I visited the American ships as happily as Lizzie Graham and I had taken our bikes over the Ulster Border to smuggle similar things from the South. Even Dennis Parry indulged, arguing why shouldn't he when that war-monger Winston Churchill and his evil Minister of Information got whole crates of brandy and champagne when the American heiress, Miss Ruth Daniels, had virtually whole shiploads sent to her home, Wacousta, in The Bishop's Avenue in London's Hampstead.

An important fact for me was that right from childhood Anthony Blunt had many more contacts with the very rich rather than with the very poor who might be good as rough trade in bed but no good for the dining-table at Windsor Castle or the Harris family at their Mayfair home. Following a lunch at Buckingham Palace, Blunt complained to his brother Wilfrid that 'It was rather a strain; I was put between two Queens.'

Books of the peerage did not account for all the rich because some could only be found in the American social registers, while Betty Crichton from Wabash, Indiana remains in my opinion, a jewel in the Duke of Westminster's family tiara. Another Betty, Assherton, however, got caught up in the Ulster scene when she set her cap at Sidney Smith from Belfast and he soon had no need to return there and do small jobs for Henry Lynch-Robinson because in London he would engage a score of assistants on his large murals. When he married the American heiress, Betty Assherton, Sidney started painting himself as a society figure on both sides of the Atlantic.

Anthony Blunt won many converts to his Socialism and his socialising among the Jewish intellectuals of Hampstead. Margot Heinemann was born of rich German-Jewish parents who moved to Hampstead and in 1931 she went to Girton College, Cambridge, in time to see the hunger marchers pass through on their way to London, and so became a Communist, stating in 1985, 'I joined the party because this was the organization that was trying to do something about unemployment and fascism. We thought that everyone was winnable for the cause because capitalism was so obviously such a rotten system. Even Guy Burgess was on our side. I remember going on a march

with him.'

They were not joined by Ruth Daniels of Wacousta in Hampstead. In 1944 Dennis Parry knew prayers had been answered because the Minister of War Transport, Lord Leathers, with private shipping interests, promised to get him to the Unevangelised Fields of Africa with a cargo of Bibles and New Testaments, although Dennis disapproved of the fact that Ruth Daniels's father was allowed to import so much of the demon drink for Winston Churchill and for Lord Tredegar's former assistant in the black masses, Brendan Bracken.

Ruth Daniels proved to be a brilliant student at Cambridge where people called her 'The Sherry Queen' which she continued to be because after an accident in 1973 she was still clutching a sherry bottle when the ambulance arrived to take her to die in hospital. The Daniels's family fortune came from orange groves and jewelry shops which sold Ingersoll watches in which they also had an interest but they finally turned their backs on New York to become the proud owners of Wacousta.

Ruth, their only child, could not have over-pleased them because her only interest other than sherry was music. After hearing Wilfrid Blunt sing lieder at Trinity College, Cambridge, where his brother Anthony was already a Fellow, Ruth asked Wilfrid to repeat the performance at Wacousta, the house in which Ruth's parents set out a sumptuous banquet for her 21st birthday which she celebrated by running away so enabling the hundreds of guests to gossip further about the Daniels's family troubles.

After the Second World War, The Bishop's Avenue filled up with Arabian kings and oil sheiks, but it was the horror-movie architecture of the Gothic-windowed Wacousta which aroused the interest of London's unemployed. Wilfrid Blunt lived to hear a Scotland Yard police spokesman announce to the press that as the strokes of Big Ben ushered in the New Year of 1985, the squatters occupying Wacousta were joined by 300 revellers who had an orgy of 'sex and destruction' that brought Wacousta's Gothic tale to an end. Ruth Daniels had already met her drunken death in 1973, but Harry Auger, the gardener who entered the neglected house to find Ruth's body, still survives, as we have all survived our own dramas of the 1980s when those responsible for desecrating the Holocaust Memorial in Gladstone Park, below the hill on which Wacousta stood, thought my 'great Jewish beak' needed more than breaking.

In 1944 I had met Ruth Daniels's neighbour and friend, Miss Miriam Schwartz, co-manager of the mission helping the escape of Jews from Germany and elsewhere. But before that, when Dennis Parry and I had distributed Scriptures on the boats in Barry Docks, I had to go with Mrs Fidler to the railway station in order to carry the luggage of her friend Sister Agnes

who always came to the Barry Convention from London. Sister Agnes had been a deaconess in the days following the Great Revival of 1904 when Mrs Fidler was the deaconess at Down Lodge Hall, Wandsworth. They lived together until middle age when the older of the two went to Wales and married the Rev Bernard Fidler. In her loneliness Sister Agnes put her head in the gas oven but had been rescued. This experience left the poor woman with a frightened look and downcast eyes, and she never felt at ease in Principal Fidler's company.

After I had got vegetables from the school garden for Sister Agnes's late lunch, Dennis and I loaded our mountain of books into the Army Scripture Reader's van and drove off to the church some miles away where our stall serviced the convention. Not being as responsive to the efficacy of prayer as some less mechanical matters the van broke down obliging a fraught Dennis to accept the only alternative of a local trader's pony and cart. The bad-tempered pony also proved unresponsive and Dennis could not catch it grazing by the Bible School's allotment.

Having worked horses in all harness on the Grahams' farm in Fermanagh I soon had the fast-trotting Tinkerbelle going at a spanking pace along the road to Lanson House where I had first to collect tin trunks to fill with books from the Bible depot. They were extremely grand affairs of black-painted metal with even grander names, including such things as 'Honourable Majors.' I found out after that the recently dead Willie Pethybridge had stored documents relating to his clients' affairs in these tin trunks and that Mrs Wills and her sister, Miss Alice Pethybridge, had brought them to Lanson House from the solicitor's office to ensure personally that every document connected with such scandals as Maundy Gregory's sale of honours and the Free Ukraine campaign went up in flames before their very eyes in the kitchen grate.

Perhaps had it not been for Tinkerbelle my fate at Lanson House would have been no different from scores of other students who had called there. In common with my predecessors I received the lightest possible handshake from Mrs Wills's arthritis-gnarled fingers and a glass of ginger-pop. This, and no more than this, was as far as any of my fellows ever got with the old lady. But when I called with Tinkerbelle and the cart to collect the grand trunks, Tinkerbelle herself won me favour in Mrs Wills's eyes. I had swallowed my ginger-pop and gave my news of Mr William Fulton and Brother Paisley in Belfast and was climbing on to the cart ready to drive away when I heard the frail fingers tapping on the window. Mrs Wills was beckoning. She called me into the drawing-room and closed the door behind us. Something obviously troubled her. Her face carried the expression of a person about to unleash feelings too-long pent up. Mrs Wills took my arm and led me to the window.

She pointed to Tinkerbelle who had deposited a neat pile of dung on the

road. Mrs Wills directed her gaze toward the golden pile and then transferred it to her rose-beds. Being a lady, Mrs Wills could not bring herself to say the word 'manure,' but in a confidential whisper she asked me if I would convey it to the rose-beds. Besides Miss Howe, the housekeeper, there was nobody else in the house, Mrs Wills explained. And since Miss Howe was a lady-housekeeper, she could not reasonably be asked to shovel up the golden balls on a public road. I perfectly understood. The rose-beds looked so under-nourished. Clearly, the mess outside was one answer to a gardener's prayer, and I was another. And soon I became Robert to Lanson House and not just 'the Irish student.' Tinkerbelle continued to produce the healthful dung for the rose-beds. Every week I collected a case-load from the wasteland by the Luchana Navy Mission where Tinkerbelle passed her tethered day.

The Barry Convention reached its climax on Friday, designated as Missionary Day with the afternoon session reserved for the Mission to the Jews and conducted by the two women who ran the society. Evangelicals, like many other sorts of religious people, had a capacity for expending enormous forces of emotional energy on things existing only in their imagination. But there was nothing imaginary about that Friday afternoon with its facts and figures about millions of Jews being slaughtered in gas chambers or left as living skeletons in the concentration camps.

The mission needed funds to rescue Jews and only people devoid of feeling could have resisted the emotion of that day's Barry appeal. Dennis Parry was not the only one in tears as he with other students and me collected the offertory which included cheques signed there and then, and, as a measure of how moved people were, a large number of gold wedding rings. For perhaps fifty years these people had worn those gold symbols of marriage but now gladly discarded them to try and save wretched men, women and children from being herded into gas chambers simply because they were born Jews. In the vestry after the highly-charged atmosphere of music and sermon began to subside, Dennis Parry's excitement flared up again as he counted the wedding rings and read the figures on the cheques.

Canon Aldis and other leading lights from the convention were invited to drawing-room tea at Lanson House before the convention's concluding service that evening. One of these luminaries, Miss Katie Stewart, had suffered embarrassment in the afternoon by having neither cheque-book nor rings, so after we had sipped our tea and sang grace, Miss Stewart went off to her house so that she could put matters right. As I was going back to the convention bookstall, she gave me a lift in her car and invited me into her house but we had hardly got through the front door when a much bigger car drew up and out got one of the most extraordinary men I had so far encountered in my young life. He flapped his arms around Miss Stewart for

this was her cousin, Lord Tredegar, and he felt so at home in the modest house that he had come into the drawing-room in his wet bathing suit having driven up from the beach.

In the corner sat the bird-like Alice Pethybridge who, although then eighty years old and destined to live over another score of years, instead of shaking Evan's hand put her thumb to her nose and wiggled her fingers rudely but mischievously at him and enquired sharply of him what he had been up to. Miss Pethybridge was a Christian who went to church every Sunday but she never attended the evangelical conventions and instead of reading her daily portion of Scripture every morning, she did **The Times** crossword.

Evan had a special fondness for 'Aunt' Alice Pethybridge and her eccentricities and independence which led her to speak her mind without fear or favour. She was an accomplished artist and the best dessert service at Tredegar Park had been painted by her before Evan was born in 1893. He learnt drawing from her and got her to edit his first poems for publication since she had been an early broadcaster of verse on the BBC. Alice thought I had been unfair by my description of Evan's life with the Pethybridge family in **The Protege** where I wrote, 'He painted well, or badly enough, to have canvases hung in the Paris Salon.'

Evan was dead and so unable to reply, but Alice was in her 95th year when I sent her the typescript and she, like Shane Leslie, defended Evan until the end. It was only later when biographies of Evan's friends and lovers were being researched by people who had met neither them nor Evan that misunderstandings arose. Dennis Parry undoubtedly thought Evan a devil but others, perhaps because of my writing about Evan and the black mass, think I am The Devil. After Dylan Thomas deserted Wyn Henderson's bed and she was taken over by his BBC colleague, the Rev W R Rodgers, Dylan continued to indulge in sherry and princesses with Evan. It was in Wyn's house that Bertie Rodgers reviewed **The Protege** for the **Sunday Times**, saying 'God is good, and the devil isn't bad thank God.'

Alice Pethybridge cherished that remark which was so typical of Bertie and Alice too. I had a taste of their irreverent and satirical banter during that first meeting with Evan. As Lady Mayoress of Cardiff, Alice had known Lloyd George and his honours agent Maundy Gregory. If Alice found anything quaint which appealed to her quaint sense of humour in the letters collected from her brother Willie's office after his death, then she did not burn them before showing them to Katie and Evan. 'Just listen to this old humbug' she might say, 'he wants a baronetcy in the name of Rhys-Ellis-Llandruffan of Llandruffan Castle which was his mother's property and feels he had suffered enough humiliation in life as Mr Ivor Jones.'

1944, I suppose, was early enough for me to learn that titles are

commodities rather than honours and with my strong Irish rebel instinct against them I was naturally on the side of Nye Bevan and his 1945-elected colleagues in the Commons who wanted the House of Lords abolished. By 1975 quite a few of Nye's old pals had been elevated to the Lords and some who failed to get a knighthood were licking their wounds and asking me to intervene. On 28 April 1975 Sir Robin Butler wrote to me from 10 Downing Street 'On the Prime Minister's behalf about political honours.' In 1990 Robin Butler was back in Downing Street as Secretary to the Cabinet with the Tory Mrs Thatcher, while the former Harold Wilson sat with our 1945 Socialist friends in the Lords, while the problems about Northern Ireland and Anthony Blunt's role in them have still not been solved. Neither Nye Bevan nor I found much interest in seeing our friends on both sides of the Irish Sea elevated to the Lords, but we were both much exercised in witches.

Associating one's name with a place, either through wealth and inheritance or through the ballot box, can be seen in the fate of the rich Evan and the poor Nye Bevan. They had both become 'Right Honourables' by the time I met Nye in the Commons and Evan in the Lords and we talked of Lord Llanover. His Christian name was Benjamin and posterity remembers 'Big Ben' since that bell at the Houses of Parliament was named after him and the Clock Tower itself, undoubtedly the world's most famous, is sometimes called Big Ben. Not until 1980 when we were in the High Court being interviewed by the press did Alice Pethybridge's cousin, Christopher Knight, tell me that his relation Big Ben Llanover had not in fact been a member of the famous Herbert family but had only changed his name to Herbert when his daughter Augusta married Mr John Herbert, and their son General Lord Treowen inherited Llanover Castle. Lettering winds around a cylindrical fountain in Kensington Gardens and tells about the ancient wells of Llanover which had a great interest for Nye Bevan, Evan Tredegar and me.

When the Pope advised his papal chamberlain, Evan, to return to Wales and marry so that he could begat Catholic children, Evan made two efforts to become a good husband and to sire heirs. It was assumed the papal chamberlain could only be happy in bed with men, 'having twins' as Rosa Lewis put it. In fact, Evan loved going to bed with the bones of a woman burnt as a witch near Tredegar in the late seventeenth century. Evan claimed that Meg Jenkins had been both a **femina saga**, wise woman, and **incantator**, a charmer.

Meg certainly must have been a powerful charmer according to the Duke of Bedford's account of Evan dressed in Meg's clothes and holding the skeleton of her hand to cause such a scene as the duke recalls of his 1937 visit, the same year in which Evan put on an even greater display for his newly-crowned friends, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. Meg Jenkins was said to have had **polymastia** to an excessive degree and these supernumerary

nipples were seen at her public examination before being immersed in one of Llanover's wells to determine her guilt or innocence of witchcraft, a practice first recorded in an English court at the trial of Arthur Bill and his parents at Northampton in 1612.

Nye Bevan was not the only Labour cabinet minister to have an interest in Evan's performances, since Prime Minister Attlee had first become Mayor of Stepney in 1919 and knew the Tredegar's East End estate and the state of Evan's mind when he assumed Meg's clothes to tell the fortunes of able-bodied sailors. Little did I know that July day in 1944 how much Evan would influence my life. But on that occasion it was not Meg's ancient bones we talked about but my profile.

Evan Tredegar certainly behaved in a way that seemed unusual to evangelical eyes, yet through my experience of theatre people in Belfast like Jean Hamilton, soon to marry into the Pethybridge family, Evan's elaborate gestures and endearing terms did not shock me. 'Just look at that profile' he asked Katie Stewart, 'Just like Ivor.' Ivor Novello, the composer and actor was Evan's exact contemporary, both born in 1893. Ivor's mother, the celebrated Madame Clara Novello Davies, had given Evan and many others, singing lessons. Ivor and Evan shared many lovers over the years after they left Wales, and both retained their interest in Spiritualism.

Katie Stewart seemed delighted that her cousin liked me but she took me aside and told me not to mention Evan or Ivor Novello at Lanson House as they, and indeed her whole family, had been mortified years ago when Vernon Wills had tried to burn down Tredegar Park mansion. This differed from the version Dennis Parry had already given me, but eventually it fitted in with the story as I got it many times in the years ahead, both from Evan and Vernon.

Daphne Fielding wrote that Evan's 'familiar...a malicious macaw' terrified people and dropped a black pearl ear-ring into the fire. But it was that other bird of ill-omen, one of Evan's pet owls, onto the leg of which the demented Vernon Wills tied a string with a blazing, oil-soaked rag at the end and made it fly into Evan's study. Evan was most indignant that his beloved Meg was not a *veneficia*, a poisoner, but if Vernon could only claim he was half-poisoned by partaking of Evan's black mass communion cup, another of my friends whom I first met at Katie Stewart's with Evan would die years later from a poisoned cup.

Professor Nicholas Skripnik, the Russian poet, spent years investigating this murder before making his conclusions in a book, but not even his widely published evidence would induce the authorities to hold an inquest. The killing was hushed up because too much would come out. Among the many titled people I met at Katie Stewart's house over the years were members of

the royal family since a cousin both of Katie and Evan, the Earl of Southesk, had married Princess Maud, daughter of the Princess Royal and the Duke of Fife. Anybody who publicly revealed any scandals within the royal family invited the Mafia-style attentions of MI5, and Anthony Blunt was an officer of that organisation who regarded himself as an authority on royalty but he was not the only officer who did.

Evan Tredegar spent much more time with Max Knight of MI5 than he did with Aleister Crowley, for Max and Evan, apart from wanting to keep 'the wicked Commies' in their place, were both deeply involved with zoology, writing books and the occult. Anthony Blunt must have been astonished when he read Andrew Boyle's *The Climate of Treason* which mentioned Prince Chula and Peter Montgomery at Cambridge but not Henry Maxwell who was described by Chula as 'my best friend at Harrow.' At Cambridge Henry Maxwell shared Peter Montgomery's rooms and they remained close until they joined me at the Buddhist memorial service for Chula in 1965. Blunt did not attend, nor did we expect him to, since Chula remained friends with his Pethybridge neighbours in Cornwall, while Henry Maxwell loved Alice Pethybridge in Cardiff, because to the end of her very long life she defended the greatest love of Henry Maxwell's life, Evan Tredegar, and these highly articulate people were not misled by Blunt's pen-name 'Your Cambridge Correspondent' in the *Spectator* when the art historian showed his sympathies with Russia.

Henry Maxwell and Prince Chula were much more at home in Tredegar Park than such people as H G Wells and the spying Moura Budberg, and no eyebrows were raised when Henry, rather than Lady Cunard or Lady Bridget Parsons, took to the opposite end of the dining table from Evan. It was Henry who saved Tredegar House from going up in flames when the jealous Vernon Wills tried to burn the place down because he felt Evan had rejected him in favour of the elegant Henry who followed Brendan Bracken into publishing.

But I would never see Evan himself so much at home as in his cousin Katie's seaside house where he presided at table and if the cook-housekeeper was absent, he acted as waiter as well. Katie had not only replaced the dead sister Gwyneth but she was also able to cope with her aunt and namesake Lady Katharine Tredegar, Evan's mother, when that stubborn lady refused to get out of her vast bird's nest and take a bath. Evan impressed me on our first meeting much more than Dennis Parry had done bursting into my room at the Barry School of Evangelism. Evan certainly bewitched me more than he cast spells over Vernon Wills who ground his dentures and stared at me disconcertingly on the sands of Barry Island.

The London lawyer who dealt with the Wills family affairs was Mr

William Joseph Robbins, the senior partner of Robbins, Olivey & Lake whose stationery proclaimed them 'Solicitors & Parliamentary Agents' with offices at 218 The Strand, immediately in front of the Royal Courts of Justice. As he also dealt with Egypt General Mission affairs I would meet him on and off over the next two years. But I had not met him on the Monday following the Barry Convention when Mrs Wills asked me to go with Dennis Parry to London and help him to carry there a heavy metal box in an old Gladstone bag. Mr Robbins had written from London and according to his letter Dennis and I had to proceed to Princess Carlos de Rohan at the Ministry of Information, or, as was quite likely if we were late because of air-raids, to her nearby home in Selwyn House.

Dil de Rohan's past as a ward of Lord Ernest Hamilton also proved useful to her war work with the Ministry of Information. Since the First World War she had known the evangelical antics which both the rich de Courcy-Hamilton brothers got up to in Wales. She also knew that the Barry School of Evangelism was linked with a similar establishment in Geneva run by the Swiss poet and publisher H E Alexander. Always thinking ahead to the day when the war would end and her shops in London and Paris would open again with their Swiss materials, Dil delighted to look into the financial affairs taking place in defiance of wartime regulations between the two Bible schools. A question had already been asked in the House of Commons about it. As early as 1933 *The Daily Sketch* was calling Dil 'A brilliant dress designer,' but she was a brilliant business woman too who never lost an opportunity to enlarge her bank balance to maintain the double-gins she and Baroness Budberg demanded before lunch.

Even as late as 30 June 1959 the balance sheet for the year ending on that date which appeared in the auditor's report on the Barry School showed 'Honoraria & Tutors' expenses £93, 13s. 2p.' Principal Fidler and his staff, like Dennis Parry, lived on faith. In Fidler's case, the Lord had provided a very rich American aunt who, unlike Dil, did not lose her fortune in the Wall Street crash. Before the war, Pastor Fidler spent part of the year on the Continent with Pastor Alexander and Pastor Niemöller until Hitler imprisoned the latter in 1937. Pastor Fidler not only lived by faith but by his wits too, and in the same way that he got my fees paid twice, first by Mrs Wills and then by Mrs Dalling, so he applied his genius to safeguarding his aunt's dollars and Swiss francs. And because Lord Leathers of William Cory & Son was the born-again Christian working in Mr Churchill's government as Minister of War Transport, he could be relied upon to cover things up should Dil de Rohan be foolishly diligent enough to catch the Barry School out in defying the strict wartime exchange controls.

What I wrote in my 1964 Morocco book about Dil's business methods

was written with her knowledge. She and Mary Oliver had gone to the Ministry of Information because the minister, Brendan Bracken, knew them from his early days at Tredegar Park, and valued Dil's expertise in running the money-changers and blackmailers of Tangier as well as the Bible-jacks of Barry and Geneva.

By day Dil and her friends occupied London University property at Senate House and by night she took her favourites home to Selwyn House, also owned by the university, for many students and staff had been evacuated to Wales. One of the people I had been proud to take to the Barry Convention in 1944 was Canon William Aldis who had gone as a missionary to Pao-Ning, China, in 1898. By 9 September 1987 the canon's son, Arnold Aldis, had retired as director of post-graduate medical studies at the University of Wales, when he wrote to me, 'It was good to hear from you and to be reminded of times now so long since passed. My knowledge of Dr. Mary Wills dates from the Winter of 1939 when I was sent to Cardiff by the University College Hospital Medical School, London to help teach surgery to the students who were being evacuated to Cardiff, as it was then feared that there would be intensive bombing of London at once. We were all accommodated at the old Y.M.C.A. Hostel at Cold Knapp in Barry, and during that first term I attended the Princess Street Mission in Barry and it was there that I met Mrs Wills. Subsequently she very kindly put up my fiancée Miss Dorothy Johnston at her home when she came to visit me before we were married in December 1939. I only got to know Mary Wills when she came home on furlough and much later when she developed disseminated sclerosis. Mary Wills of course served in Egypt General Mission, and my father and Douglas Porter, the home director of the E.G.M. were close friends.'

Although Anthony Blunt's father always provided a pulpit for such sought-after preachers as William Aldis and Douglas Porter, as a Professor of Art History in London University, Blunt resented being sought-after in 1965 when his employer wanted Dil de Rohan removed from Selwyn House because she was illegally sub-letting the property to university students at wildly inflated prices while she went off to Spain for the winter. But in 1944 Blunt knew perfectly well that Guy Burgess, who shared his flat and his spying activities, was spending his lunch breaks with Dil and her Ministry of Information friend, Enriqueta Harris, to whose Mayfair home Blunt, Burgess, Victor Rothschild and the Liddell brothers resorted for dinner at night.

Since those days I have had much correspondence on the subject of wartime activities, and in a letter to me dated 19 January 1990 Enriqueta Harris states, 'I am dismayed to find that I never acknowledged your long letter of 3rd December...I read it of course on its arrival but as I did not know many of the people you mention you can be sure of my discretion.' Dil and

Enriqueta saw Guy Burgess nearly every weekday during the course of their work, but this did not necessarily imply any overlapping of evening and weekend events at Dil's flat and the Harris home at Chesterfield Gardens. Nevertheless, Dil relied upon Enriqueta and me not only to find suitable student tenants for her, but also to help her generally which we continued to do until 1965.

The whole literature about spying is riddled with inaccuracies simply because in the Dil-Blunt circle espionage and homosexuality were inseparably intertwined, and writers have wrongly assumed that this was an essential characteristic of successful spying and that therefore everybody in it must be tarred with the same brush. Yet Kim Philby, the Russian agent most closely involved with Tomas Harris, was certainly not gay. Religion causes further misunderstanding. Certain families were Jewish and perhaps clung together because anti-Semitism was for long fashionable, even before Hitler, but as far as I was concerned, although Dil and Blunt had evangelical backgrounds, their true religion was worship of the British royal family.

Dil and Blunt were both well aware that in 1944 their old friend Queen Mary wanted to retrieve certain potentially compromising royal letters and their retrieval formed part of my mission to London with Dennis Parry.

Because of the question asked earlier in the House of Commons about the Barry School of Evangelism, we were under the strictest instructions that if we were stopped and questioned by the police we were to affirm that the contents of the metal box neither came from the Barry School nor were they going to Principal Alexander's school in Geneva. We must keep to the facts that we had been asked simply to convey the box from Lanson House to Princess de Rohan and did not know what the box contained, its key being kept in a separate sealed envelope. Dennis Parry, of course, could not stop speculating about the value of what we carried and how many Jewish lives would be saved from the gas chambers.

If Willie Pethybridge had died and most of his letters had been burnt at Lanson House, his fellow lawyer and Liberal leader, Lloyd George, was still alive and neither Dennis nor I had any idea about the sale of honours and why Lord Mayor Pethybridge's Cardiff had been dubbed 'The City of Dreadful Knights.' Certain letters could not be destroyed and together with family works of art had to go to Willie's old friend Lady Anne Cory at Belgrave Square. Only Princess de Rohan was in a position to deal with the contents of the Gladstone bag.

Two years earlier I had been a cabin-boy delighted to go ashore for rationed chocolate and un-rationed french letters for the crew. Now I felt embarrassed to be partnered with the irrational Dennis Parry who was the last person Mrs Wills should have entrusted with such a secret mission. We

should have sat reading or quietly gazing out of the window, attracting as little attention as possible. But not Dennis. He could not keep still for five minutes together, but was up threatening to halt the train if smokers in non-smoking compartments did not stop sinning on the spot. As always, he asked strangers if they were saved and thrust Gospel tracts into their hands. If he spotted Sacred Heart badges in Catholic lapels out came special editions about the fate of those who had received the golden rose from the Pope.

Tactical details such as forcing Gospel tracts on people who did not want them formed an important part of the evangelical campaign but so did grand strategy. Dennis Parry's faithful friend, Ian Paisley, knew the very existence of Northern Ireland depended on the perpetuation of Protestant beliefs in a Protestant crown. Dennis had no doubt that Britain's greatness depended entirely on keeping its throne Protestant. The church history they taught us at Barry ensured we knew that when Queen Victoria's granddaughter Princess Ena had forsaken her Protestant faith to marry a Catholic King of Spain her 'wedding garments were bespattered with human blood.' A still-not-completely-tamed youth like myself could feel no pangs that General Boulanger had committed suicide after receiving the papal blessing of the golden rose, or that 'the charity bazaar' in Paris went up in flames destroying 'nearly 150 of the aristocracy' because the Papal Nuncio had given the affair his blessing.

The other side of the coin, the Catholic one, was recorded by Francis Rose, 'Evan Tredegar perhaps went too far in his fantasies when his passion for fancy dress led him to wear clerical dress at a party given by the disgraced and exiled Infante of Spain, Don Luis, Prince of Orleans, where cocaine was served on silver salvers carried by negro boys and powdered footmen. On another occasion arriving for a Eucharistic congress, Evan landed from a liner, again wearing his clerical garb, which on this occasion he was, by Vatican law, entitled to wear as representative of a lay order. On landing, he was mistaken for the Papal Nuncio because of his red buttons; the reception committee knelt, kissed his ring, and received his blessing amidst the flashlights of the press photographers. The real Nuncio, that old and worthy Cardinal Mercier of Belgium, was later found fast asleep in his cabin. It must be said that on this occasion Evan himself was completely fooled and was not as is said today, "making mock". Alas, it was not the long-suffering Popes who were obliged to ex-communicate Lord Tredegar from society but Queen Mary.

Because of an air-raid Dennis Parry and I did not reach the top floor of Selwyn House until early evening. The man who opened the door obviously had no idea who we were and grandly demanded to know who we wanted. Dennis, having been to the Ministry of Information the year before, simply

said, 'The Princess.' In an even grander tone he informed us that 'Her Serene Highness has gone out. I am Sir Francis Rose.' But after reading our letter of introduction from the Parliamentary Agent, he showed us into a large living-room with unusual furniture painted dark green relieved by Alpine scenery. I could see the hostile reception had upset Dennis for we had been made to feel very small fry. It was only years later when I read Cecil Beaton's diaries that I learnt that at this period in the war Rose's affair was a Glaswegian sailor called Ted.

But Dennis Parry was not at a loss for long. Like all Barry students Dennis followed Ian Paisley's example and prayed. 'Lord give me a weapon that will turn a boomerang in the face of the Devil.' Dennis took from his briefcase the tract which seemed most suitable for the occasion judging by the Catholic pictures of the Virgin Mary around the room. But when Sir Francis read about the Queen of Spain's 'wedding garments were bespattered with human blood' I thought the baronet was going to have a heart attack. He spluttered with rage. Didn't we realise 'His Most Catholic Majesty' was his god-father? The pair of us ought to be locked up.

Things might have got worse but at that juncture a big, jolly woman came in with a corgi dog called Junior. Rose stormed out threatening to call the police. Such scenes left Dennis unperturbed and in the weeks ahead I was to see how he upset less grand people who did not hesitate to call the police, and how the police often turned up at the Barry School of Evangelism. On my second day there the Lord Mayor of Cardiff had appeared wanting to billet bombed-out London evacuees in the large building. As well as Dennis, other students had been to prison or sent down the coal-pits as Bevin Boys, while one was suspected of guiding German bombers to the docks because he left the black-out curtains open. But that great lover of German youth, Francis Rose was not merely suspected of 'leaving lights on and blinds up' but did it so repeatedly at Cecil Beaton's home that Rose had to leave and join Dil at Selwyn House. Dennis had no fear of Rose calling the police but dogs terrified him, which was unfortunate, for the corgi Junior locked himself onto Dennis's leg and began masturbating with evident pleasure. Fearing his garments, like the Queen of Spain's, would be bespattered with his own blood, Dennis called out.

He was rescued by the big, jolly woman shouting at Junior, 'Stop dat, you bogger, or I knife de ballies from you.' Junior took not the slightest notice, being clearly accustomed to such threats expressed in decidedly un-evangelical terms. Dennis was not, however, and cringed with fear. Without more ado the woman grabbed Junior and shut him in another room.

She was Katusha, the Russian dancer, Catherine Devilliers, and she made us tea. Because of food shortages in England, Mary Wills regularly sent

food parcels from Egypt with delicacies that could be had in plenty from Cairo's Arab markets, and her parcels always included boxes of halva. Mrs Wills had sent one to Princess de Rohan whom she had known from the days when Dil lived with Lord Ernest Hamilton. I handed the box of halva to Katusha as it had become extremely oily in the overheated room just under the slate roof. Katusha gave us thin wafers of it to eat with our bread and jam. I watched astonished at the way Katusha poured the tea and used her knife. Her arms and hands and the tiny knife curved through the air like a ballet. Princess de Rohan's entrance cut short these niceties. She looked in the kitchen and seeing that in spite of the box of halva being addressed to her, we three were eating it, she made a most un-serene sally from the kitchen wielding a frying-pan which, as I was to learn over the years, was her favourite weapon for attacking poor Katusha.

When she knew the Gladstone bag contained goodies more precious than mere Egyptian halva, the princess assumed as much of a regal air as her condition would allow, for the smell, the slur of speech and uncertainty of movement showed both Dennis and me that she had come straight from the pub. We made for the underground station as quickly as we could and as we entered one side of the elevator we saw Francis Rose leave by the other side with two policemen.

Cecil Beaton's biographer, Hugo Vickers, captured 'the wayward baronet' well when he wrote, 'On a visit to London he was robbed; back in Wales he threw bricks through windows to ensure arrest and a roof for Christmas.'

When Mrs Wills asked Dennis Parry to convey to London the Gladstone bag with royal letters and the jewelry collected amid tears at the Barry Convention on behalf of the Mission to the Jews, she was certain it would reach its destination and that its contents would not be stolen by Dennis going off with the first butch sailor that took his fancy, as would have been the case with Sir Francis Rose, 4th Baronet of Montreal.

In *The Strings Are False* Louis MacNeice wrote, 'The soldiers came to Sunday morning service and sat in the gallery; they seemed to be all boots.' The officers sat downstairs with their families which included Patrick McClellan who was back in Ulster in 1936 with the Universal Grand Opera Company one of whose double-bass players, Terry, lodged at my mother's with others of the musicians. In *No Surrender* I noted, 'Not all our lodgers were as thoughtful as Terry, who often got out the frying-pan himself and made the tea.' Over the years I would share theatrical digs with Patrick in many places from Bournemouth to Dublin, but most memorably in Hanley. I wrote a story about this, *Man in a Pub*, and when he read it Louis MacNeice recognised so many of the characters that he insisted his BBC department

should dramatise it.

Because of his international touring with operas and plays Patrick kept only a small room in Grenville Street, London, behind Dil de Rohan's but MacNeice and Guy Burgess and other BBC staff would find us all at the nearby Lamb pub. Dil had been the ward of Lord Ernest Hamilton, the Tyrone MP and author, and so she liked to think of herself as an authority on Northern Ireland. The Ulster actor and BBC announcer, Robert MacDermott, became very close to Dil and after his death I had to fill his shoes in running Dil's entertainments. These formed useful links for Dil heading her Swiss Desk in the war, but were not as important as the connections she formed during her years of living in Berlin when she joined Lonsdale Bryans, Johannes Popitz, who retired in 1932 as Minister of Finance, and Ludwig Beck, former chief of the German General Staff, and others belonging to the Wednesday Society who formed the German Resistance wanting to get rid of Hitler and make a deal with England against Stalin's Russia.

Wolf Rudiger Hess writes, 'Amateur peace mediators, such as the British globetrotter Lonsdale Bryans, who maintained contact with the German Resistance were whistled to heel by the Foreign Office as "unwelcome." Secretary of State Cadogan hoped that no one was giving the impression that "we are putting out peace feelers."'

By the time I arrived at Dil's flat the 'Hess Case' run by Lonsdale Bryans had completely collapsed but not the British government's interest in Hess's mental state and whether he could stand trial as a war criminal, even though he had been on a peace mission when captured, following the failure of Lonsdale Bryans's earlier peace attempt. I served a purpose in reporting to Dil on Hess yet this soon seemed overshadowed by Dennis Parry preaching that Hitler would win the war.

War Games

I was sixteen years old and all the world seemed beautiful, especially Abergavenny as the train puffed into it in the evening after my return from London. I had to catch a bus into the inky folds of the hills. Already the Sugar Loaf was no more than a silhouette with obtrusive clarity against the sky. And nightfall was complete by the time I reached Baille Glas Church which was to be my headquarters for the next two months. I found the Mayflower Gospel Caravan resting under a high hedge in the churchyard. From an open door of the church a stripe of yellow light fell across the neglected grass. The door's hinges groaned when I pushed. An oil lamp showed that I stood in the vestry and that a young man was preparing a supper of rice over a primus stove.

We introduced ourselves with mutual expressions of pleasure at our forthcoming work together in the Caravan Mission of Wales. But I think my enthusiasm suffered from my hunger. The train journey and a sharp walk up the valley from the bus stop had given me an appetite which the smell of burning rice sharpened into pain. Derek Porter, who waved a wooden spoon as he spoke, wanted full details of my adventures in the Lord's service. And before we could dig into the rice there had to be thanksgiving and prayer for my safe arrival at Baille Glas.

Brother Porter told me how anxious he was to hand the work over to me soon so that he could proceed to the London School of Tropical Medicine where it was hoped I would follow in due course. Dennis Parry on the sister caravan, La Roc, would go straight to Africa to start his twenty years with the Unevangelised Fields Mission in the Congo. Derek Porter explained how the surrounding land belonged to the Herbert family of Llanover Castle. Leases passed from father to son over many generations among the long-established families who farmed much of the Llanover estate. At Ty-cock, Farmer Durham's 'saved' family saved us, the evangelising students from Barry, from domestic chores by baking our bread, giving us hot baths and meals at weekends, and arranging for our Mayflower Caravan to be parked in Baille Glas churchyard.

Temporarily living at Ty-cock Farm was Mrs Margaret Walton-Turner who many poor people used to call 'The Flying Angel.' In the 1920s Mrs Turner had been a familiar sight in London's East End as she roared through the slums on her motorbike to deliver babies or tend the dying, her deaconess's long head-dress flying in the wind and her medical bag tied to the

pillion. When she married George Walton-Turner, a wealthy business man, the Flying Angel started an orphanage near Moreton, her home outside Exmouth, as well as Rest Haven for elderly poor. By 1940 she had been widowed and gave Moreton as a wartime refuge to Dr Barnado's, and returned to her native Wales to live in a bed-sitting room at Ty-cock Farm. When I went back to my studies at Barry she donned her deaconess's head-dress and moved into the Mayflower Caravan.

For over thirty years Mrs Turner would write to me and other students she had known on the gospel caravans, sending us news and press cuttings of local events. As a medical missionary she had known Lord Tredegar's East End estates and did not like them or their owner whom she had treated as a sick boy home from Eton. But as an old 'praying partner' of Katie Stewart, Mrs Turner acted as a buffer between Evan the Catholic convert rivalling Principal Fidler's enthusiasm for inveigling very young men into 'making decisions' for the Lord. The Rev Fidler used the Caravan Mission to attract youthful converts in the valleys and coal-mining towns owned by Lord Tredegar, and after Derek Porter left, Mrs Turner and I held services in halls or more romantically on barges gliding through the valley canals.

Since photo-copying did not exist in those days, when Mrs Turner wrote to me she often enclosed letters she had received from our mutual friends, including this from Mrs Fidler of 19 January 1959, 'My Darling Margaret, Many Happy Returns of the 18th. Sorry to be a day late !! I hope you are keeping warm and well. I have been indoors for weeks now but praise the Lord I am feeling better now than I have been for some time. It seems ages since you and I met, I hope we shall see each other some day, if only to remember past years. We had some good times together and happy memories. I am glad that you have our Prayer Letter, it keeps us in touch, and you get news of our students....With lots of love, Always your own beloved Marie XXXX.'

After 'beloved Marie' became 'Mrs Bernard Fidler' and her poor friend, Sister Agnes, put her head in the gas oven, it was the kindly Mrs Turner who got the deserted Agnes down to Devon and helped her to accept life without 'beloved Marie', now transfigured into Mrs Fidler, matron of the Barry School of Evangelism. Indeed, after my first day at the Barry Convention, Principal Fidler came to me and said he had witnessed a great improvement in Sister Agnes. She had laughed at the pony Tinkerbell refusing to be caught by Dennis Parry, and at the manner in which I had dealt with the high-spirited animal. Both the Rev and Mrs Fidler were therefore overjoyed to hear that the recluse, Sister Agnes, had decided to spend some weeks at Ty-cock Farm with the widowed Mrs Turner who had been both physician and friend during the crisis when sister Marie walked out of their flat to marry Bernard Fidler. The

Barry School of Evangelism's powers-that-be were very pleased with my handling of Sister Agnes and hoped that in addition I would be as adept as Dennis Parry at saving souls.

Margaret Turner came from a large family born to an Abergavenny chartered accountant called Restall and they all knew more than the business practices of local coalmine owners such as Lord Tredegar and Sir Clifford Cory. After her career as a medical missionary and then as chatelaine of the beautiful Moreton in Devon, Margaret Turner returned home to Abergavenny which she loved and she became a cherished figure in the Forward Mission Halls and in Canon Henry Stewart's Church of Wales. She endured the canon's nephew Evan Tredegar, and tried not to appear affronted by Sir Francis Rose's outrages which in the final period of the war he often committed in the name of Princess de Rohan's work at the Ministry of Information where she headed the Swiss Department. It certainly appears to be no coincidence that it was the Swiss Minister in London, Walther Thurnheer, who travelled to Abergavenny to interview its most famous inhabitant from June 1942 to October 1945, Rudolf Hess, Hitler's Deputy Führer.

When he heard that Hess had piloted himself to Scotland, Hitler addressed the Nazi leaders on 13 May 1941, 'Hess was completely in the hands of astrologers, eye-diagnosticians and nature-healers! And now he has gone to Britain in the mad hope of seeing his English friends and making peace between Germany and Britain!'

But which of Hess's associates in Germany had his English friends visited before the war? At his trial, and for months before it, Hess claimed to have lost his memory. The American team which examined Hess included Colonel Burton Andrus who wrote, 'We think that the only reason he remembers Hitler is because of abnormal sex relations with him. A homosexual naturally would tend to remember a man with whom he had abnormal sex relations, instead of his wife with whom he had normal sex relations.'

These assertions by the Nuremberg's prison commandant are based on the 1924 experience in another prison, Landsberg, when for a year Hess had been closely confined with both Hitler and Ernst Röhm. Hess's young wife was extremely jealous of the poems her husband wrote to Hitler and of what was taking place and got no comfort at all when Hess wrote to her, 'Ich liebe ihn, I love him.' After Hitler had Ernst Röhm and dozens of others butchered in the 1934 putsch, Hess's health broke down and another side of his nature became obvious to many, one of whom, chief Adjutant Alfred Leitgen, wrote, 'pronounced - I would say almost feminine - instinct.' Within weeks of Röhm's murder Hess began his friendship with Konrad Henlein, the young Sudeten-German leader known to be another closet homosexual according to

Heinrich Himmler's handwritten notes.

However, those dreams about the future which Hess and Hitler shared in 1924 as they lay in Landsberg prison bore no resemblance to Hess's thoughts as a prisoner in Maidiff Court which in peace-time Margaret Turner knew as an admission clinic to Pen-y-Fal, the County Mental Hospital at Abergavenny. Two Deputy Lieutenants for the County of Monmouthshire were Lord Tredegar and his friend Colonel Vaughan of Courtfield. But before the war Hess's circle had been known most intimately by Anthony Eden who was now marking his letters about Hess 'Utmost secrecy.'

Another of Francis Rose's clique to love the young blond boys of Hitler's Germany was Lord Sackville who, as a music critic, used to go to Covent Garden with Peter Montgomery, Bridget Parsons and Henry Maxwell. One of the best known published photographs of Eddy Sackville shows him in the garden with parasol and white Pekinese. Eddy so adored Tibby Lecky-Browne-Lecky's life as Lady Windermere at Ecclesville and Ireland's tolerance of such characters that Eddy preferred to live in Tipperary rather than in his stately home at Knole which usually went with the title. Virginia Woolf wrote 'if Eddy chooses to plunge his poker in an ant-heap or a woman or the next young man he meets in Bond Street it's all the same to me.' It certainly was not all the same to Eddy whose scene consisted of humiliation at the hands of 'rough trade.'

The helpless Christ in the arms of a bull-necked Joseph of Arimathea depicted by Cherith McKinstry excited Eddy and he insisted that Peter Montgomery should buy the large canvas and that I reproduce it in Ulster. I was given a pencil and wash portrait of a boy in an Eton collar which to many people looks exactly as Eddy did when at Eton and astonishing everyone by his mastery of the keyboard. His is a face from a Greek icon but there was nothing saintly about his masochist passion of being on the receiving end of the physical and emotional pounding. Eddy's desire to be humiliated by male lovers is shown in this published letter he wrote from his youthful days in Berlin about his latest pick-up to Raymond Mortimer, 'I think he has more Sex Appeal than anyone I've seen. The other day, in a mood of gaiety, he led me with his dog lead in the street (at night) as we were on our way to a dance at the Local; I nearly expired with ecstasy.'

Reviewing a biography of Lord Sackville by Michael De-la-Noy, the *Sunday Times* said, 'Whether or not he had an affair with Anthony Eden, he certainly became disastrously involved with another baronet.' In wartime Britain the Foreign Secretary had no wish to be reminded of former homosexual relationships, particularly as for years his career and reputation had faced catastrophe through Lady Houston's illuminated sign on her yacht, 'Is Anthony Eden a Pansy?'

By 1944 the Swiss Minister was arranging for Hess to be removed from Abergavenny to Geneva. At her Swiss desk in London at the Ministry of Information Dil de Rohan wanted to know if any trace of amnesia could be found when Hess was confronted with friends who had known him as Deputy Führer when Sir Francis Rose was hostessing Ernst Röhm's wild parties for the German youth movement. For two years Hess had made many journeys by car and walking in the hills around Abergavenny but by 1944 he told the Swiss Minister he wished 'to limit the outside exercise because of problems from spectators.' Certainly the children who used to come to the village services Dennis Parry and I conducted always excitedly reported any sighting of Hess as if he were the Loch Ness Monster.

Then Dennis went too far. He had specially learnt a few words in German with which to accost Hess should they meet when Dennis planned to foist Gospel tracts on him. But then Dennis overstepped the mark of what was acceptable by declaiming from an Abergavenny pulpit that Hitler was the anti-Christ, a thesis substantiated by abstruse calculations with numbers derived from the Führer's birth and rise to power, numbers which, hey presto corresponded with those of the Beast in the Book of Revelation. This upset people dreadfully, because of course, the Bible made it plain that the anti-Christ would win the war. In those wartime days of careless-talk-costs-lives, preaching that Hitler, alias anti-Christ, would win, amounted to sedition. Not that such scruples worried Dennis Parry who treated police warnings with the same contempt as his spell in Cardiff Prison as a conscientious objector.

At the outbreak of the war Sir George Catlin, 'one of the shapers of 20th Century thinking' to quote his autobiography's blurb, was having his fortune told by Dil de Rohan and Mary Oliver at Pembroke Lodge. Francis Rose wrote of Hitler consulting Mary Oliver's father Gurdjieff about the future, and Hitler himself told his party leaders that his Deputy Führer was 'completely in the hands of astrologers' from the days of their close relationship with Ernst Röhm. Many of Röhm's circle themselves were indeed in the hands of occultists and cabbalists of which the best known was Evan Tredegar. It is not known how many, if any, of these seers foretold the irony of Hess now being a prisoner in a county where Evan was the leading landowner and colliery proprietor in addition to his various official activities to do with all branches of the armed services.

Ever since Hess flew to Scotland in 1941 the Russians had speculated on the reason for this attempt to make a peace deal between Britain and Germany. The Russians suspected the aim was for the two countries to unite in attacking the Soviet Union. Moscow was quick to observe that almost on the day of Hess's arrival in Scotland, the serious bombing of Britain had virtually stopped, as though Hitler and Churchill were contemplating a deal.

The Russians wanted their suspicions confirmed or allayed and to find out as much as he could for his Soviet masters was the reason why Guy Burgess spent so many of his lunch breaks in Dil de Rohan's company. She and Katusha had lived in pre-war Germany for fifteen years and Dil's husband, Prince Carlos de Rohan, had been one of the first homosexuals attracted to Ernst Röhm's influential group.

No one knew better than Dil de Rohan how to play their cards closely or control the ouija board both literally and metaphorically. Dil never wanted to be again where the Wall Street crash had left her and she knew how to keep in with wealthy families like the Wills and Corys from whom rich pickings could be extracted by those such as Dil who had their wits about them. The evangelical sway those families held in Wales was unassailable. They were anti-Soviet Union and all its satanic works of Communism and atheism, and they never came to terms with Britain's wartime alliance with Moscow. Dil liked to think she knew on which side her personal bread was buttered.

The major evangelical magazine in Wales was called **The Life of Faith** and like Dennis Parry, Dil had no end of faith in the Welsh wealth. Miss Bessie Stephens, honorary treasurer to the Barry School of Evangelism, had written in **The Life of Faith** about the faith of 'spiritual giants' such as Principal Fidler. She wrote from her splendid house which had been transported from Sweden to Wales so many years before, as though presaging the entry of Swedes into evangelical and wartime affairs. Before leaving for Scotland, Hess had been party to peace talks between Britain and Germany in August 1944 when Dr Ludwig Weissauer went from Berlin to talk with the British Minister, Victor Mallet, in Stockholm. It was Dil's bitter enemy, Elizabeth Sprigge, who headed the Swedish desk at the Ministry of Information and she arranged secret visits to Stockholm at which Pastor Fidler's scheme for the release of Pastor Niemöller from Sachsenhausen concentration camp was high on the agenda.

Dil saw my own position, almost at the gate of Hess's prison, to say nothing of the dock gates at the ports of Barry and Cardiff, as a heaven-sent opportunity to use me both as a tool in her devious machinations and also as a source of fresh country produce, which included her favourite items such as pheasants and salmon, for her wining-and-dining table at Selwyn House where she entertained those in the know as to why her boss, Brendan Bracken, had started life in society as the protege of Evan Tredegar.

It was quite certain that Prime Minister Churchill would not tell Tory Party leaders that in the early 1920s his Minister of Information and exceptionally close friend Brendan Bracken had been 'completely in the hands of astrologers' such as Lord Tredegar. Few non-Welsh people understood the situation in South Wales better than Churchill did. His widowed mother

had been helped with wealth from the Guest Steel Works controlled by his aunt Lady Wimborne's family, and her son, 'Captain, Right Hon Frederick Guest' in addition to being Winston Churchill's cousin was also his private secretary for years. Anyone studying Maundy Gregory's life soon comes across the names of Freddy Guest, Evan Tredegar and Prince Danylo Skoropadsky of the Free Ukraine campaign.

Juan Pujol was 'the most successful double agent ever' because of his so-called Garbo operations thought up by Tomas Harris and his sisters and friends. Garbo's English improved over the years but the foreign accent did not go unnoticed and when he was arrested in the East End while making notes of bomb damage and taken to Bow Police Station, the officer in charge there had to check with Garbo's official at the Ministry of Information. This was the agent known as J(3), namely Enriqueta Harris. The collaboration between Garbo and Enriqueta worked extremely well, but the same could not be said of Garbo and an unfortunate agent called Chamillus who had never been happy since being forced to leave sunny Gibraltar for rainy England. Garbo wrote that Chamillus 'displayed the ability of a simpleton. I am disgusted with him.'

Even the long-suffering Tomas Harris eventually got fed up with Chamillus's complaining about life generally and his treatment by MI5 in particular and so the unhappy Gibraltarian decided he could take no more disguised as a waiter in a military canteen and disappeared. In fact, he went into hiding with an old farmer who kept four cows in South Wales, though MI5 could always get in touch with the remote mountain farm through Dagobert, an ex-seaman living in Swansea who also acted as Garbo's sub-agent and would do anything for money. Garbo was fully aware of Dagobert's game and described him as 'a thoroughly undesirable character' but such desperate people were prepared to lose their lives in the game of espionage.

My possession of passes to both Barry and Cardiff docks proved useful to me and the Ministry of Information when somebody had to be smuggled on board ship and cartons of Lucky Strikes and tins of spam hidden amongst the Bibles and New Testaments before we left the American Liberty ships.

At last, however, Garbo himself fell once again under police suspicion and Tomas Harris had to spread word quickly that Garbo had fled London and was presumed dead. But in September 1944 Garbo followed the miserable Chamillus into hiding with the old farmer in South Wales. Also hiding there was a Belgian who successfully made himself out to be as simple as Chamillus, but who turned out to be most articulate when accosted in French by Evan Tredegar.

Dagobert was very much involved with members of the Welsh Nationalist Party who hated the rich Jews of Cardiff and Swansea and who

formed a brotherhood called the 'Aryan World Order Movement' which, like Hitler and his Nazis wanted to exterminate their political and racial enemies. Evan Tredgar and his former protege, Brendan Bracken, were well aware that the unpleasant publications of this Welsh-speaking group were printed in the cellar of the farmhouse now sheltering Garbo and the far-from-simple Belgian. Evan Tredegar, and his friend in the occult world, Max Knight, the MI5 boss who fancied Tom Driberg's good looks, were not double-crossed by the greatest of double-agents, Juan Pujol, whom Tomas Harris christened Garbo. Mixed up in Wales with these MI5 agents and sub-agents were army deserters, both British and American, who took to living rough in the Welsh hills.

Besides their sightings of Rudolf Hess, the children at our village services would excitedly report the theft of chickens or eggs by these bearded deserters, one of whose portraits appeared on the dust-jacket of my book **The Protege**. I wrote in that book, 'According to some reports a few of these deserters had lived native in the hills for years. I knew what the general attitude to deserters was. I also knew what my own attitude as the Lord's chosen minister should be, for I had heard Brother Parry carry on about them often enough while I visited the other caravan. But though I said nothing, instead of agreeing that these soldiers were to be numbered amongst the blackest of sinners, I secretly felt sorry for them. I failed to see why the mission brothers condemned deserters for hating war when they themselves demanded the right to conscientious objection. Also, I felt sorry because the soldiers would never be able to return to normal life again unless they became prisoners. Rain and storm chased them from hole to hole in the mountainside. Hunger might drive them down to outlying farms to steal food and clothes.'

The police examined the farmers' complaints as they did those of people who thought Dennis Parry should be returned to Cardiff Prison for preaching about Hitler being the anti-Christ, a belief which, of course, implied that Hitler would win the war and the Hess would walk out of Maindiff Court in triumph. The person most concerned in her capacity as the landlord was Lady Mary Herbert of Llanover Castle. Peter Coats, like his Ulster friends Captain Peter Montgomery and Captain John Brooke, was an ADC on the staff of Lord Wavell, Commander-in-Chief in India before becoming Viceroy. In late 1943, Wavell called a conference of Provincial Governors. In **Of Generals and Gardens**, Peter Coats wrote, 'David Clowes, Jack Herbert's ADC, writes "H.E. is likely to die between 1 and 6 December." All the arrangements are made already, and it's a bit macabre. Mary will go to Darjeeling, to wait for a boat to take her home.'

Sir John Herbert, the Governor of Bengal, did die and was much mourned by his tenants of the Llanover estate. His young and attractive

widow, Lady Mary, found it more than a little macabre to learn of Dennis Parry preaching that Hitler was the anti-Christ and would win the war. Her new duties included being a Lady in Waiting to the Queen and she was duty-bound to deal with Dennis Parry's seditious propaganda.

I was sitting in Ty-cock's bath when Farmer Durham announced that 'Lady Mary' had come and wanted to see me immediately. Somehow, I managed to dispel her ladyship's fears about the Hitler/anti-Christ controversy and assured her Dennis Parry had left Wales and would soon be on his way as a missionary to the Congo. Feelings about conscientious objectors and trade union rights were strong issues in London drawing-rooms as well as miners' kitchens in the Welsh valleys and when Mary Herbert's brother John came home as a wounded prisoner of war he made the headlines by kicking the Tredegar pit-boy turned cabinet minister in the pants for daring to enter a well-known Tory Club.

Evan Tredegar harboured similar malice against working class upstarts like Nye Bevan who emulated their betters by wanting to enter Tory clubs while sitting in Socialist Cabinets. On 29 March 1934 Frances Stevenson, the secretary to her lover Lloyd George, wrote that twelve years earlier when he was still Prime Minister she had been invited to a luncheon to meet 'Young men of whom big things were expected. As far as I remember, they consisted of Evan Morgan, Brendan Bracken, a satellite of Winston Churchill and a financial mystery..' Miss Stevenson's 'As far as I remember' might be better rendered, 'As far as I wish to remember.'

Lloyd George ceased being Prime Minister in 1922 when Brendan Bracken was still a schoolmaster who had already met those three significant friends Evan Tredegar, Peter Churchill and Dickie Mountbatten but not yet the all-important Winston Churchill. But Frances Stevenson's confusion is understandable. As Lloyd George's widow and countess, Frances did not write her autobiography until 1967 and in it she talks of the 1919 Paris Peace Conference to which she went with Prime Minister Lloyd George and to which Evan went from Algeria to entertain the important visitors. She wrote, 'In fact it was the last time that I accepted an invitation from the future Lord Tredegar. He had found it difficult to secure good seats at the Opéra, and it did not take me long to realise, when we arrived there, that L.G. was the person Evan was expected to escort, not me! The red carpet was down, and important officials awaited the arrival of the distinguished foreign statesman, though being Frenchmen they made the best of the situation. But I was very angry. His mother was always most kind to me, and often took me to the opera in London. Augustus John, who was a great friend of hers, used frequently to join us... On one occasion when we went to the opera Puccini was in a box with two Russian ex-archduchesses and I was taken along very shy and awkward

to be presented.'

Frances Stevenson indeed spent much time with Evan's mother and there was always sherry and princesses in attendance. And she was 'very angry' with Evan whom she met as a handsome Welsh Guards officer in the First World War when he also acted as private secretary in the Ministry of Labour. However, when she heard that sex scandals were mixed up with Evan's devotion to the Catholic Church, Miss Stevenson settled for the much older Lloyd George's bed. Some of the rumours told to Dennis Parry and me by the people of Abergavenny in 1944 were confirmed in print during 1989 by Fiona MacCarthy's biography of Evan's fellow convert to Catholicism Eric Gill.

Evan's insensibilities as a disappointed Tory politician who had not lived up to Frances Stevenson's expectations, like his friend Brendan Bracken, were moderated by his sensibilities as a poet, and learning rather than wealth made him an authority on John Donne and various composers. But nothing could disguise his eminence as a powerful landlord who owned big chunks of Bow and Bromley besides those in South Wales. Evan's fellow Papal Chamberlain, Colonel Vaughan of Courtfield, could hardly call the Mayflower Caravan anything but respectable compared to the wagon drawn by horse and carrying goats, hens, dogs and children with Eric Gill who had made a name for himself carving the Stations of the Cross for Cardinal Vaughan's new Westminster Cathedral.

The Black Mountains and their villages had seen other preachers with strange habits and prophesies about the anti-Christ. Before Evan Tredegar joined in the nude swimming parties that Eric Gill and his children enjoyed at Llanthony Abbey, the monastery ruins had attained notoriety through the hellfire preaching and the singing like a woman alto of the Reverend Joseph Leycester Lyne, otherwise Father Ignatius - 'the only primitive Christian still living' as Dean Stanley described his cousin at Llanthony. If Evan Tredegar felt cheated by not having Dennis Parry returned to Cardiff Prison for preaching Hitler as the anti-Christ, he must have been even more frustrated to find that the Llanover women were not selling their petticoats to buy me champagne at the Mayflower Gospel Caravan and that I was not following Father Ignatius's example and caning young men in public for going to dances in Abergavenny.

But life at Llanthony Abbey as described by Fiona MacCarthy in her biography of Eric Gill, made Father Ignatius look very primitive indeed. The sculptor was a lay member of the Order of St Dominic and he wore a girdle of chastity of the Confraternity of Angelic Warfare. He did not believe in bathrooms and invited guest to urinate with him outside 'to the greater glory of God.' He was so in love with the size of his penis that as well as often

drawing it Gill got his secretary, Elizabeth Bill, to take exact measurement for the guests after holy water had been generously splashed over the dining-table when Father McNabb, the Dominican priest, would prostrate himself on the floor and kiss the visitors' feet. From Gill's diaries it appears he had incestuous relationships for years with two of his sisters and his two elder daughters.

Incest and child sex abuse disgust me yet neither activity could be dissociated from people I had the misfortune to have dealings with. No wonder the Duke of Bedford wrote that he hastened to add that it was Lady Cunard who took him to Tredegar Park. From personal observation I agree with Frances Stevenson that 'Lady Cunard was a woman without manners... At the luncheon table she called across to me: "I have a friend, a patron of music, who wants a baronetcy. How much would it cost? Would £30,000 be enough." The baronetcy was not given during L.G.'s Government, but I believe it was given later. Lady Cunard was a persistent woman.'

In 1943 Lloyd George made an honest woman of Frances Stevenson by marrying her and she became his countess when he was ennobled in 1945, the year of his death. And that was when big problems arose for Mrs Charles Wills and myself. Lloyd George's daughter became Lady Megan, the MP in the Liberal cause for Anglesey for whom Lord Mayor Pethybridge and his sister Alice often campaigned. Pethybridge and Lloyd George were both lawyers, both born in the 1860s and both had skeletons in the cupboard, not that Frances Stevenson was much of a secret, but money over the sale of titles and covering up the homosexual blackmail of Maundy Gregory and others in the Free Ukraine campaign, had not been easy. Frances wrote of her troubles with her step-daughter Lady Megan, 'There can be no doubt that Megan thought her behaviour was justified. She had taken a vow many years before that because I had supplanted her mother she would never speak to me again. I ought to have realised that in all the demonstrations against me her justification was that she was keeping faith with her mother.'

With what seemed to Mrs Wills like undue haste, Lady Megan appeared at Lanson House in Barry immediately after her father's death and demanded all the letters about Maundy Gregory and the Free Ukraine papers. And Megan never went alone, whether visiting Lanson House to see Mabel Wills or Broadcasting House in London to see Guy Burgess. Her constant companion was William Gruffydd, who had been Professor of Celtic at the University of Wales since 1918. Dylan Thomas certainly did not write to Billy Gruffydd that he was going to have sherry and princesses with Lord Tredegar because Evan was Billy's sworn enemy. Dylan called Billy 'The Village Stallion' but Mrs Wills, like I did in *The Protege*, referred to the woman-chaser as 'Don Juan.'

The Times obituary of Billy Gruffydd said, 'It is as a poet, critic and man of letters' that he would be remembered. Apart from plays and poems, Billy liked writing long letters of a very passionate nature to his girlfriends on House of Commons notepaper, especially to Mrs Eric Payne, the wife of a Wills executive. In *The Protege* I wrote of the horror experienced by Mrs Wills and her family as they awaited Billy's letters of the late 1940s, 'They could see the policeman walking up the drive to make enquiries. Fortunately, Mrs Wills was dead before such dire depths were reached.'

In August 1943 Hugh Dalton made entries in his war diary about Liberals in Wales who might join the Labour Party after the war and so defeat the Tories. He added, 'Megan Lloyd George, Clem Davies and Professor Gruffydd would come with him.' But Megan did not desert the Liberals until 1957 and she became the Labour MP for Carmarthen by which time her friend Billy Gruffydd was dead, much, I am ashamed to confess, to my relief. In the same diary Dalton recorded, 'I then showed Attlee all the correspondence between myself and Bracken. He read it all through. He said, "This man is not fit to be a minister in the middle of a war." I said that he had clearly wanted to bring on a crisis, while Attlee was away...'

Billy Gruffydd, born at Gorffwysfa, Carnarvonshire in 1881, became a renowned Welsh poet in traditional style and certainly looked the part in his sumptuous Druid's robes when he got the crown at the 1909 National Eisteddfod. Only he could be chosen as the Chairman of the National Confederation for the Preservation of Welsh Culture, and report to Hugh Dalton and others what the wicked Tories were doing, because, of course, it was the Labour leader Clem Attlee, Churchill's Deputy Prime Minister, who had declared that his cabinet colleague, Evan's protege Brendan Bracken, 'is not fit to be a minister in the middle of a war.'

A few days after Lady Mary Herbert came up to Ty-cock Farm to interview me about Dennis Parry and the Hitler/anti-Christ controversy, Evan and his cousin Katie Stewart arrived to stay at Llanover Castle. Katie Stewart went up daily to see her old friend Mrs Turner at Ty-cock Farm and from their conversation recalling the past I started to take an interest in the eccentric behaviour both of Father Ignatius and Eric Gill at Llanthony Abbey. Dennis's odd behaviour, his paranoid baiting of Catholics, and masochistic preparations for sufferings in the Congo which made him eat baked beans direct from the tin and wash his clothes and shave in cold water, paled besides the tales from Llanthony.

If I did not attempt to raise people from the dead as Father Ignatius used to do, at least I possessed an unusual physical characteristic which fascinated Evan when he came to see me at Baille Glas Church. The Barry School's summer programme meant that I would be alone for weeks in that remote

churchyard and though I was not apprehensive of natural or supernatural incidents, I found the long evenings with only sermons to prepare very dull, so unlike the singing and dancing around the Grahams's farm kitchen in the Erne Valley which I missed very much.

The church had long been abandoned as a place of worship since not even the Oxford-educated Rev Richard Rees of the Forward Mission could stop the farmhands and miners from listening to the new doctrine of Socialism preached by Nye Bevan or the ancient Druid rites recited by the crowned High Priest, Professor Gruffydd, rather than 'the still, small voice of Jesus.' But the church remained intact, complete with pews and hymn-books simply awaiting the Caravan Mission to Wales to rekindle the spark of the 1904 Revival. Most of the organ pipes still sounded and Evan fell upon this at once. He had known Baille Glas Church in his own 'saved' youth when his uncle, Canon Stewart, stayed at Llanover Castle and preached 'the Word in and out of season.'

Evan had come equipped with a hamper of cold chicken and ham, puddings, fruit, wine and a bottle of whisky, fare which would have given Principal Fidler a 'queer turn.' Evan spread a feast before me while the colony of bats fluttered in and out of the broken church windows festooned with ivy. Years of bird and bat droppings, damp and oil-lamp smoke gave out a grave-like smell of decay even on a warm July night and excited Evan much more than the best Prinknash incense. The small oil-lamp cast a soft light that failed to penetrate the deeper shadows.

Evan drew my Common Prayer Book closer to the lamp and read on the fly-leaf the faded, elegant inscription, 'Isabella Diana Denham, Fairwood Park, September 28th 1829.' That I owned a book which had graced Parson Yeats's church at Drumcliffe thrilled Evan who had quarrelled with W B Yeats. Their row was not so much over the Irish poet's sex operation to renew his virility (which BBC Television in 1989 showed had revived his bad temper) as over Yeats's sin of omission by failing to include the sonnets of Lord Alfred Douglas in an anthology. Let the wicked Yeats rot in a pauper's grave for this offence to the beloved Bosie who Evan was anxious for me to meet.

After the first glass of wine I relaxed since I had little experience with alcohol. Evan explained to me the history of the wells of Llanover though in much more lurid detail than the inscription on Lord Treowan's fountain in Kensington Gardens. Evan's witch Meg had been immersed in one of the wells and if he could not find the ashes of the fire that burnt Meg to death, he could certainly water his whisky from a Llanover well.

Then the conversation swerved suddenly as Evan stared in amazement at the palm of my right hand. W B Yeats had felt obliged to have his dying sex-drive renewed with injections from monkey glands, but I had the real

thing. Evan had studied palmistry from school days at Eton and had read the fortunes of kings and presidents yet he had never seen anyone with such a complete 'simian crease,' that is, the palm's line of head and line of heart merged in one strongly-marked line across the hand. Nothing could have stirred Evan the Welsh Druid and black magic priest so much. Was I not aware that this was the birth-sign of 'Claudius the God' and other strongly-willed people born to create? But of course I did not know, for the simple reason that nobody had ever pointed this out before, and, not until years later when asked to display my hand to medical students in Canada, did I realise how rare such a simian crease is.

But on that summer night in 1944 in the setting of soft light and gloom in Baille Glas Church Evan did more than reveal a wonder of palmistry. He boosted my morale. I had grown to feel such a damp squid in Dennis Parry's hellfire company, since I found it not only impossible but also ridiculous to ask Catholic or Protestant friends around Granshagh's turf-fire, or even my own mother, if she was 'saved.' I knew she was saved in my eyes because nobody wore the crown of motherhood so gallantly under great strain as she had done in the years of the Hungry Thirties. Whatever truth or nonsense there may have been in Evan's reading of my palm, it certainly gave me much needed self-confidence at that moment in my life. There was no urgency for Evan to take me to Sussex to see the great Lord Alfred Douglas but I must appear at Llanover Castle the very next day to show the palm of my hand to the house-party.

But Evan had come to Baille Glas Church already aware that I had experienced Spiritualism in Belfast before I got 'saved' in Pastor Tom Rea's church. Evan's own performances of fortune-telling and clairvoyance as house-party entertainment have appeared in many books, such as the Duke of Bedford's autobiography. But as the Duke wrote, Evan's 'notions of hospitality were pretty bizarre. One of the evenings we were there he settled his house-party of twenty or thirty people down to dinner and then went off to some regimental or local do, abandoning his guests to carry on as best they could.' Evan was a very rich peer who loved society but quickly tired of it.

He never tired of adventure, and it is in Nina Hamnett's book *Laughing Torso*, published in Evan's lifetime and with his approval, that Evan as artist can be glimpsed; Evan having replica dolls of himself made by Marie Wassilieff, the Russian pupil of Matisse; Evan and Aleister Crowley livening the cocktails with laudanum; Evan with Diaghilev and Stravinsky and the new ballet *Les Matelots*. There would have to be sailors somewhere and possibly sailors were more important even than sherry and princesses.

So then, on that summer evening of 1944, Evan's sense of adventure made him enjoy visiting a church he had known as an immature youth

professing to be 'saved' because his strong-willed sister had also taken 'the decision for Christ.' The thrill of Baille Glas Church and its occult atmosphere coupled with the discovery of my palm made a different Evan from the one I normally saw in his family's and friends' drawing-rooms telling fortunes to please people who had never heard of Modigliani and Wassilieff. Then Evan appeared in his witch's cloak and I experienced for the first time that terrifying drop in temperature as he went through his nightly devotions. Curiosity got the better of my fright which in my case was not so great as Farmer Durham's when he called with a can of milk.

There were several Durham brothers, all tenant farmers on the Llanover estate and all devotees of the Herbert family, and they had known Evan since the days when he went to the neighbourhood's Revival meetings with Canon Stewart. The Durhams accepted that Evan customarily went to house-parties and enlivened long weekends with his fortune-telling but Farmer Durham never dreamed he would give his forelock salute to his lordship with the latter wearing a witch's clothes in a church where Farmer Durham had so often pumped the organ as a boy. Evan immediately recognised the farmer and as if the whole scene were nothing out of the ordinary invited him to examine my hand and to say whether he had ever seen such a palm. When they departed I went to my bunk in the Gospel caravan. But not to pray and not to sleep.

Evan's parting words, based on what he saw in my palm, were 'To thyself be true.' This slight misquotation of the advice given by Polonius to the young Hamlet, impressed me so much that instead of going to sleep I wrote a poem to Evan called *Thyself*. When I showed it to Katie Stewart she liked the poem so much that she said it must be published. But because Evan was known as 'The Playboy Poet' and chaired so many committees to do with the arts, the verses had first to go for criticism to the Poetry Society before publication. So I made my debut in print and when Katie put the poem on a Christmas card it delighted her friends Queen Mary and Brendan Bracken.

True to himself, besides his enjoyment of swimming and travelling, Evan indulged his passion for photography but the subject matter of his pictures meant that he had to have an elaborate dark-room of his own since many of the exposures were not only photographic and certainly could not be sent for development to the local Boots the chemist. And the pictures Evan took that summer in Baille Glas Church would lead to his final showdown with Queen Mary and society.

Katie Stewart had no intention of waiting to see my hand until such time as I arrived for tea at the castle. My extraordinary evening with Evan made me oversleep next morning, but before I had pumped the primus stove to boil my breakfast egg, Katie, Mrs Turner and Sister Agnes turned up at the church. Lady Mary Herbert knew Ulster well because she often stayed there

with her uncle the Marquis of Londonderry who had laid the foundation stone of our parish church, St Simon's, and who remained a friend of Canon Maguire. Lord Londonderry's secretary was another of his Unionist friends, Montgomery Hyde, whose sister Diana produced my adventures for the BBC in the 1960s, but Montgomery Hyde and I did not reveal our wartime exploits until 1988 on Channel 4 Television.

Margaret Turner knew many of the staff at the County Mental Hospital and could pass on accounts of Hess to Mary Herbert who in turn would carry back this latest news to Buckingham Palace where Mary was 'Woman of the Bedchamber to H.M. The Queen' and where in any case Hess addressed letters to King George VI in such terms, 'I came to England banking on the fairness of the English people...Today I still believe in the fairness of the British people. Therefore I feel sure that the treatment meted out to me is not in accordance with their wishes. I have no doubt that only a few people are responsible for it. I am counting on fairness.'

Harold Nicolson had wanted desperately to work at the Ministry of Information because so 'seldom have so many literary intellectuals been assembled under one roof.' But right from the beginning Nicolson found the Ministry 'riddled with jealousies and intrigues.' In his diary Nicolson wrote that his minister 'had managed yesterday to persuade the P.M. that we must put out some directive about our attitude towards Rudolf Hess.' Hess provided a favourite subject of jealousy and intrigue at the Ministry and the prisoner was far from mad when he wrote to the King that it was not fairness of the British people but that 'a few people are responsible,' the few in fact largely wanting to cover-up their own tracks in pre-war Germany.

Lady Herbert had visitors to Llanover Castle during the war other than Evan who had known Hess in Germany when Francis Rose and Dil de Rohan were impressing the Nazi leaders. To Llanover went Prince Danylo Skoropadsky who had seen his father proclaimed Hetman of the Ukraine in 1918 on the orders of Queen Victoria's grandson, the Kaiser. In 1944 Prince Danylo's father was still living in what was left of Hitler's wartime Germany while Danylo himself, having fled to Britain just before the war, was designing war aircraft by day and drinking at Dil's flat at night with his fellow Ukrainians, Baroness Budberg and Catherine Devilliers. On many occasions Danylo went with friends to see Katusha's production of Russian dances in the ballet **Night on a Bare Mountain** at the Savoy Theatre.

During my first visit to Llanover Castle Danylo and I only spoke briefly to each other while Mary Herbert laughingly asked if I knew any good Catholic Irish colleens who would marry the Hetmanych of the Ukraine. Old issues die hard, and even the political earthquakes in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union which saw the 1980s out and the 1990s in had not done away

with the problem of whether Moscow would or would not give official recognition to the extensive and influential Ukraine Catholic Church.

The photographs in the book **For the Ukraine**, which records Prince Danylo's 1937 tour of the USA and Canada, bear captions such as, 'Hetmanych Danylo among boys and girls of the Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood of Canada, Toronto Branch.' The powerful United Hetman Organisation which arranged and managed the wide-ranging tour was largely Roman Catholic and its members, along with the Pope and his chamberlain, Evan Tredegar, prayed for Prince Danylo's conversion which would be reinforced if he had a Catholic wife and eventually children. But the person Danylo decided to marry at long last was the dynamic and indomitable Halina Melnyk-Kaluzynska who was as determined as Danylo to remain in communion with the Orthodox Church to which both were born.

But in 1944 as the cucumber sandwiches were passed at Llanover Castle, Halina was a young widow walking for four months with her infant son Andrew from Poland through Germany and over the Alps to Italy, surviving various RAF bombings, including the destruction of Dresden. Halina's walk is an extraordinary epic of human endurance, and her, and Danylo's biographies have been carefully researched by the poet Nicholas Skripnik, who had lived and studied with his friend Danylo in Berlin during the 1920s and 30s. But as these are published in Russian which I cannot read I have largely depended on talks with Nicholas Skripnik about Halina's early career. It was not until New Year's Eve 1981 that I heard Halina herself tell the epic story in detail of the four-month walk, to that relation of the Herberts of Llanover, Christopher Knight. He was there with his architectural colleague, George Balcombe, one of whose former students had been Andrew Melnyk-Kaluzynska, who had been the baby Halina had pushed in his pram through the bombing of Dresden in 1944. With heavy sadness Halina and I followed Andrew's coffin to Hampstead in 1988. Some weeks later Halina sent me the many letters and papers of our friend Countess Frederika Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee.

My relationship with Frederika is a prime example of the disinformation put around by the Ministry of Information as I knew it, and which thought nothing of dressing corpses in military uniforms and dropping them in the sea as decoys to the Germans. I met Frederika soon after Evan Tredegar died in 1949 when various requiem masses attempted to give rest to his turbulent soul, the principal mass being that at Farm Street Jesuit Church celebrated by his old friend and confessor, Father C C Martindale. When I went to Farm Street later Father Martindale introduced me to Countess Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee and as he had come from celebrating yet another requiem mass I assumed it was for the late Count Heinrich Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee who

had died two months before his friend Evan. Dil de Rohan had returned to London from living in Paris and was undergoing instruction to become a Catholic just like her friend from the USA, Frederika, did in 1933 before marrying into the Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee family.

Some of my friends are involved with my music studio, others with my dogs. In **How Do You Do?** Dil wrote, 'Even foreign animals were no longer tolerated in Berlin. German workmen half strangled our fox-terrier before we could rescue her with the aid of the police, because, they said, she had killed a German chicken.' Enriqueta Harris always keeps Bedlington dogs, each successively called Toby, and she wrote to me on 12 June 1988, 'I was not with Toby when he made his famous rush across Kensington Gardens, in fact I did very little dog-walking last winter.' Enriqueta and I had walked our dogs together for years, and it was a rare letter indeed that failed to mention them. Similarly, Dil and Frederika had dog-walked in Berlin during the 1930s and resumed it in 1950.

What John Francis, a young reporter, wrote in 1979 about the trouble I had in the law courts with Anthony Blunt, led Frederika to include me in her dog walks. I usually took Halina's dogs with my own greyhound Shandy around the path by the playing fields adjoining Hampstead Cemetery which Frederika's house overlooked. As everybody around knew her to be a rich countess with property to let at high rents in Hampstead and Richmond, naturally she felt nervous of venturing alone into the lane which featured flashing and more serious crime to which Frederika already had been exposed.

I could sense that any enemy of Blunt and Burgess was a friend of the countess, as I and other neighbours called her. Indeed, her arrogance would not even tolerate Vote Labour posters in people's windows while local Labour politicians got the sharp end of her tongue. We all understood, and naturally did so sympathetically, that her husband, Count Heinrich, had been the German Ambassador to Turkey but because of profound disagreement with Hitler over the Jewish question, the count and countess fled to England in 1939 and, like so many refugees, arrived virtually penniless. From their first humble home they had both worked hard to build up a good estate and Frederika was not going to allow Socialist riff-raff to display their red banners in her tenants' windows.

A plate by her front door proclaimed Frederika as the secretary of the neighbourhood watch committee, but neither the Labour people nor her immediate neighbours who came to my house as musicians had any idea who appointed her or indeed if such a committee had ever existed. These eccentricities seemed to me harmless enough and I rather defended the old girl since she had nobody left in the world except a simple sister in Richmond, and Frederika's bossy manner

isolated her unlike her friend, the popular Halina.

Frederika knew Hampstead Cemetery intimately from living next to it for so long and one day as we strolled around we passed Admiral de Courcy-Hamilton's suitably grand grave close to Prince Danylo's and a modest one nearby to Mary Pilgrim. Frederika drew up her slight stature to look every inch the Countess Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee. 'Mary Pilgrim indeed!' she snorted. 'Her real name was Doris Pillitz. A Jewess.' It so happened that I had long admired the 1920s and 30s portraits by Hedi Pillitz who bequeathed me some more of her pictures to add to my already large collection. Hedi never disguised the fact that her family were deeply upset when her actress sister not only became a Catholic but even changed her name. The Pillitzes were notable shipping people among a Jewish community which Anthony Blunt and I knew well and of which Enriqueta Harris and her family formed a part. That small incident in the cemetery confirmed what I suspected, that Frederika was violently anti-Jewish racially as well as ultra-right wing politically.

Only when she died in 1988 and Halina sent me the thirty files of the Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee's papers did I realise what a fool Dil de Rohan had made of me. In that last letter of 22 June 1965 when the three police officers from Gray's Inn Road went to Dil's flat to read 'all' my correspondence, Dil had added, 'But I would beseech you not to completely wreck what to me was a valued and **trusted** friendship. "Reliable Robin" I always called you.' Only too true. It took me almost forty years to discover the truth about Frederika and what was happening in 1944 when I was luring Hess's military guard into Baille Glas Church to try and get information to send to Dil.

Frederika was born a Miss Marvin-Kaufmann on 7 April 1899 at Genf in Switzerland of an Austrian father and American mother. In 1911 Mrs Marvin-Kaufmann leased her Berlin properties and returned to Amherst, Mass., where she had grown up. She did her shopping at The Corham Company on Fifth Avenue and kept every account, such as paying 58 dollars for a vegetable dish and 24 dollars for a sauce boat. By 1926 Mrs Marvin-Kaufmann and her younger daughter Ellen were back living in Switzerland while Frederika lived at the Linden Gardens Hotel in Paddington.

Dil de Rohan and her American mother knew the family and asked the local vicar's wife, Mrs Hilda Blunt, to introduce Frederika to some suitable young men among whom a good husband might be found. On 8 January 1926 Frederika wrote a 16-page letter to her sister saying, 'Of course Betty urges me to get married. I've told about Maurice and she was all in favour of him. Says that in Belfast at least dentists are considered quite as good as doctors and that a great many of them are in the best society with lawyers, politicians and bigwigs of every sort! Looks as if I'd better live in Belfast.'

But Dil de Rohan and Mrs Marvin-Kaufmann were horrified at the idea and Frederika returned to Berlin where Dil introduced her to Heinrich Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee, a senior diplomat. Frederika certainly fell in love with the family's romantic castles such as Schloss Waldburg perched on top of a mountain. Her family had serious doubts not only about the wisdom of marriage between a woman of 34 and a man of 59 but also about the kind of man. Ellen wrote to her sister on 14 May 1933, 'It did hurt so to think of your having some more hell about Heinrich. But of course if he is what he seems to be proving himself to be it would be madness to go on being engaged to him.' But despite Frederika's knowledge that Heinrich adored Ernst Röhm and his homosexual circle, she was determined to become a countess and was soon writing to Ellen about 'Max, my brother-in-law the Prince.' Fortunately Heinrich was away at his embassy in Vienna when the night of the long knives came for Ernst Röhm and so many others in 1934. Because the castles were tied to the titles borne by the elder brother Prince Maximilian, Frederika took her friend Dil de Rohan's advice and in the grounds of Schloss Wolfegg built a suitably-sized house of her own for the days when Heinrich retired from the Foreign Office.

Dil took a great interest in the design and furnishing of this house but four years later it was not complete and Frederika wrote to her mother on 28 May 1937, 'The architect was at the house with us today and we were encouraged about everything... This picture is of the lake that belongs to Max and that's where the gulls' eggs came from that we had at our wedding.'

Meanwhile, Mrs Marvin-Kaufmann wrote every day from Switzerland to her daughter Frederika who often sent her photographs of the new Nazi leaders whom they entertained at their castles or embassies. On 8 April 1933 the mother wrote, 'I then went to the bank - but they refused my German money. He informed me that things were going very badly in Germany. When Jews hold the money - it seems as if there is no knowing.' On the 13 April, 'My own sweet darling, You are sending me marvellous cards - the pictures of Hitler are wonderful. He never looks arrogant or conceited but earnest and unselfconscious.' On the 27 April, 'No wonder the German Government has taken steps to stop impertinent English from interfering. They are perfectly right to punish foreigners who interfere.' On the 9 May, 'Of course darling I got the sweet pictures - they are a delight. My wall is covered with the pictures of statesmen you have sent me.' On the 25 May, 'I must say darling that I agree with Edwin. The democratic regime was odious, like being in the grip of people like Höhne and his class - into their tastes and ways forced on us, and so full of graft and as to the Jews - anyone who has lived in Germany as I have knows what a stranglehold they had on the country. There are Jewish philanthropists - but even they are working for their race and the rank and file

of Jews are a menace. My knowledge is very superficial of course, but I am sure a cleaning out was absolutely necessary. There were lots of odious things in the old days - but Hitler's aim seems to be to keep what was best of the old, and to do away with the abuses the world has outgrown.'

These views appear to be shared with equal vehemence by Mrs Marvin-Kaufmann and her two daughters, Frederika and Ellen. In complete contradiction of the version put around by Dil de Rohan and others, Mrs Marvin-Kaufmann's son-in-law, Count Heinrich, certainly approved of what the Nazis were doing and he was never hounded by Hitler. On the other hand when the war was over Count Heinrich continued to live at his castle in the American Zone of occupied Germany and his pension as a diplomat ended only at his death in 1949. This suggests that he was useful in some way to the Allies. His brother Max and family were not so lucky. Frederika wrote on 30th July 1949 from Allgäu in Bavaria to her sister Ellen and said that one of Max's castles, Hohenthurm near Halle in the Russian Zone, was 'now taken by the Communists.'

The correspondence between the two sisters shows that over the years the one thing which Ellen would never accept was Frederika's marriage to Count Heinrich. When she wrote to Frederika on 14 May 1933 about 'having more hell about Heinrich. . . it would be madness to go on being engaged to him,' Ellen was already a highly nervous person who had been attending the same sort of clinics as Rudolf Hess. Like Hess, there was never at this stage, any question of Ellen being certified, but eventually her hatred of her brother-in-law, Count Heinrich and his homosexual associates, drove her to threaten that she would murder him in a fashion even worse than the fate of Ernst Röhm. Ellen did not keep her feelings to herself but wrote to Frederika, 'My murderous instincts not being subconscious I don't have to hide behind fictitious characters but just imagine committing murders myself.'

For years Mrs Marvin-Kaufmann and Ellen lived in hotels in Lausanne and went every day to the British and American Club and wrote on the club's elegant notepaper to Frederika wherever she happened to be because of her husband's diplomatic missions. Mrs Marvin-Kaufmann loved living in hotels because it excused her from responsibility of running one of the large houses in Berlin left to the two girls by their Austrian father and which brought enough in rents to pay the hotel bills.

By the end of 1938, the looming war between Britain and Germany as well as the hostilities between Ellen and her brother-in-law, led Mrs Marvin-Kaufmann to leave Switzerland for one of the Berlin properties while Ellen was taken to London and certified insane and placed in hospital at Friern Barnet. Ellen travelled on an American passport and in order to disguise all trace of the German connection she was known as Miss Ellen Marvin, as

Frederika stated in a letter to the National Provincial Bank at Edgware on 15 January 1939, 'Dear Sirs, **Re: Account of Miss Ellen Marvin**, I herewith enclose a credit of 213.30 Marks for Miss Ellen Marvin from the Konversionskasse here, this sum representing half of the mortgage interest on the house in the Schulstr, 40a Berlin, due for the 3rd and 4th quarter 1938. Will you kindly arrange with Henry Schroeder & Co., London to have his money paid into Miss Marvin's account.'

On 2 March 1939 Frederika was writing to the Edgware bank, 'I herewith enclose a credit of 213.30 Marks for Miss Ellen Marvin . . . this sum representing half of the 2.5% interest on Miss Marvin's money deposited on a Vorzugssparkonto, for the second half of 1938.' On 14 April 1939 Frederika was writing to the bank with another sum 'representing 6% mortgage interest for the 1st quarter 1939 on Schulstrasse 40a.' On 24 May 1939 there was 228.55 Marks 'representing half of the interest on capital deposited with Delbruck Schickler & Co., Berlin.' There were other sums for other houses and bank deposits and on 29 August 1939 the manager of the Edgware Bank wrote to Frederika 'on the question of appointing a Receiver in respect of Miss Marvin's affairs, and in the meantime should the Hospital write to us, I will explain the position.'

The question of appointing a Receiver was undertaken by the London County Council and they were alarmed that many of Ellen's problems stemmed from religious differences within her family. As early as 29 August 1933 Mrs Marvin-Kaufmann was writing to Frederika 'I don't know who influenced Ellen against religion - but I think she was so influenced, and then a sort of smarty aleck vanity pushed her on. Mollie Jasin said it seemed to her exactly as if an evil spirit were in her.' The Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsees were renowned in religious circles and what Ellen could not understand was that the photographs of Nazi leaders such as Hitler, Hess and Röhm kept company with others, equally numerous, of cardinals and bishops, and many famous Jesuit priests such as Carl Haggenen. What Father C C Martindale meant to Evan Tredegar, Father Haggenen did to Count Heinrich. It was Father Haggenen who in 1921 had written the biography of Countess Sophie Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee with illustrations of her castles and chapels.

Ellen disappointed her family by failing to be impressed with this official biography, which like most such commissions was meant to please. While Frederika had been going to the Rev Stanley Blunt's church at Paddington in 1926 when courting the dentist from Belfast, Mr and Mrs George Walton-Turner were spending their summer holidays in Lausanne and being impressed with Ellen's aptitude at getting a good portrait likeness with a few pencil strokes. When the Walton-Turners heard that not only Frederika had gone over to the Roman Church in order to become a countess,

but that her mother had also become a Catholic simply to please the famous occupants of Wolfegg Castle, they were furious. But Mrs Turner had worked as a medical missionary for more than twenty years and believed she could best serve Ellen's interests by remaining on good terms with the mother and sister. On 8 January 1940, Frederika wrote to Margaret Turner, 'And of course to be cut off now and unable to visit her is an added sorrow, but your great, great kindness has helped to soften that more than I can ever tell you. I just want to tell you that we are well and very comfortable and Mamma comes down a lot. We have a new cook and a new maid and like both. The roebuck and the chamois come very near the house so that Mamma can watch them from the window.'

Having given up her own home in Devon to Dr Barnardo's, Margaret Turner was much more interested in the unwanted Ellen than the deer park at Wolfegg Castle. The LCC soon found out that Ellen had more than enough money of her own to be in a private clinic with her own room rather than in a large dormitory with a score of others in much worse mental states. Ellen was well enough on most days to go out and visit friends and she hated returning to what she regarded as a prison in the evenings. So she started wandering and looking for men to sleep with. As the war progressed, the authorities grew increasingly concerned about Ellen's finances.

Getting money out of Berlin grew more and more difficult, but Pastor Fidler was only too delighted to finance Ellen in England if her German marks would go to Pastor Niemöller's causes and the rescue of Jews. This was the sort of transaction which contravened wartime currency regulations and eventually brought Fidler's name before the House of Commons. But the half-American Winston Churchill, much of whose family fortune in the 1880s had come from South Wales evangelicals, had no illusions about the reputations of American bankers. On 25 May 1933, Mrs Marvin-Kaufmann wrote to Frederika, 'Such horrid things are happening every day it doesn't seem possible. Banker after banker in America is being had up before the Courts for **theft** - dishonesty and cheating - Harriman - a very big man in finance (I went to school with his sister) has turned out one of the worst. Morgan was up before the Courts and came through unscathed.'

Frederika's own letters to the Edgware bank always ended, 'Will you kindly arrange as usual with J. Henry Schroder & Co., 145 Leadenhall Street to have the above sum paid into Miss Marvin's account.' Baron Bruno Schroder had been the head of the banking firms of J Henry Schroder of London and J Henry Schroder Banking Corporation of New York. Baron Bruno and his cousin Baron Kurt of Cologne were both aware of Hitler's power at an early date. In their book **Who Financed Hitler**, James and Suzanne Pool write, 'When von Papen finally decided the time had come to

finance the Nazi Party prior to forming a coalition government with Hitler, he went to the financier who was most aware of international opinion towards the Nazis - Baron Kurt von Schroder. The arrangement to cover the debt of the Nazi Party and finance their expenses until they were in power was made among Hitler, von Papen and von Schroder in the financier's home in Cologne on January 4, 1932.'

Until he died in 1940, Baron Bruno lived in Dell Park at Englefield Green near Windsor and when the Red Cross took over the mansion his two sisters went to their Scottish estate at Drimnin in Argyllshire which, of course, was too far for Ellen to visit her old friends. The two Schroder sisters still lived at Drimnin in 1951 when I went to sketch them for my book *The Field of Sighing*. Meanwhile, in 1944 I had gone on from writing poems to an article about wartime evangelical activities in Wales, which was to appear in Principal Alexander's international magazine published in Geneva. As the summer wore on, I seldom spent a full week on the Gospel caravan as Pastor Fidler frequently went away on religious/political engagements. As Mrs Fidler could not bear to be left alone in the empty buildings of the Barry School I was summoned to keep her company and see that 'The Word was going out to the four corners of the world' by taking Bibles and New Testaments in many languages on board the ships in Barry and Cardiff docks.

This gave me ample opportunity to stock up on rationed goods to take back to the Baille Glas Church or up to Dil de Rohan in London. But whereas Dil welcomed my accounts of Hess, she did not relish reading my name in print under an article that revealed which American and Swedish ships were in Barry dock duly evangelised by me.

As the autumn term at the Barry School drew near and Dil in London and Frederika at Schloss Wolfegg realised not only that their old friend Hitler would lose the war but also that the evil Communists would invade Germany and take more than castles from the Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee family, all attention seemed to be focussed on whether Hess could be deemed sane to stand trial as a war criminal. At her Swiss Department in the Ministry of Information, Dil was not impressed when the Swiss Minister went to Abergavenny and reported that Hess had lost his memory. Nor did Dil think much of the scheme which sent Lord Beaverbrook to see Hess, since the two men had next to nothing in common.

Hess himself had not lost faith in Hitler's victory, and even late in 1944 he was crouching by his wireless listening to the news of German V-missiles bombing Antwerp, the main American supply port. The man inside Maindiff Court who talked most to the prisoner was Major Ellis Jones, a doctor who organised Hess's rambles and car-rides. Having studied Hess carefully during the previous two years, Major Ellis Jones came to the conclusion that a sudden

shock might restore his patient's memory. This idea appealed to Hess, because if he went to neutral Switzerland, the Protecting Power in his case, and met his family that indeed might shock his memory back to normality.

Pastor Fidler had been advocating for years that both Hess and Pastor Niemöller should be transferred to God-fearing Geneva where Pastor Alexander reigned as distinguished teacher and trusted member of the Red Cross. All sorts of variations on this theme existed, especially among those going on secret missions to Sweden. Although Major Ellis Jones issued a medical certificate for Hess's application to go under guard to Switzerland, Dil and her superiors simply laughed at the proposal. Dil thought a shock could be produced by sending Ellen Marvin with her knowledge of Nazi parties, Hess's guilt over Ernst Röhm's death, homeopathic clinics and photographs of the old days, to try out the Deputy Führer's loss of memory.

Ellen's sense of humour and love of adventure helped her to get through the years during which she remained certified and as soon as the hated brother-in-law died, she was released and for almost another four decades lived a normal, happy life. When Frederika wrote to Mrs Turner on 8 January 1940 she said, 'I shall only make this letter short so that it may pass the censor more quickly.' There were many gaps in Ellen's wartime letters to her mother and sister and there are complaints about letters not arriving at all. This is not surprising in view of Ellen's language. After the war, when letter-censoring ended, Ellen continued to write about 'my murderous instincts.' A favourite way of dispatching her victim was to put the man's 'head on the window-sill and banging the window sash up and down on it till the head was completely crushed.'

Dil de Rohan was not the only person the Minister of Information and Churchill's close friend and adviser, Brendan Bracken, trusted about German/Swiss affairs. Francis Rose had shared Bracken's circle in South Wales as well as on the Continent, and got particularly detailed and accurate information on the Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee connection with the Nazi party and the party's financial backers, the Schroder family and friends. Dil's autobiography had been so often rejected by publishers on grounds of libel because most of our wartime colleagues were still alive when she wrote, so I had to be her editorial watchdog and ensure that she limited her views on the still-living Hess and the Abergavenny staff to, 'No one had the least idea how a prisoner of State should be treated. Books were searched, authorities consulted. The last prisoner of State had been in 1600 and he had been taken to the Tower of London in a coach drawn by six white horses!'

An important visitor to England during the war was President Roosevelt's wife who told reporters, 'Now that I have come to England and seen you all, I realise that Mr Churchill reflected the spirit of every man and woman in the

country.' Those who knew Dil de Rohan were not surprised later when Mrs Roosevelt's lesbian secrets became a sensational best-seller. Dil's closest friend in the Roosevelt family was the President's daughter-in-law, Faye Emerson, the actress. In 1964 Dil wrote to me from Spain, 'My hair has at last, turned snowy white. I like it better. I look aggressively well. Faye Emerson should have arrived last week, then things will really begin to hum.' Faye duly arrived and with her Roosevelt son was photographed with Dil, which I reproduce in this book to show how 'aggressively well' Dil looked in the company of a favourite friend. Some of my friends, however, only recall Dil's aggressive appearance and behaviour at all times.

But Dil also had a reputation for comic remarks, usually at her ex-friends' expense. In *How Do You Do?* she wrote of her wartime office, 'My secretary was a charming girl of twenty called Anne. Following a troublesome night's bombing, I enquired, "Anne, I suppose you are alright? By the way what is your surname and where do you live?" "My name is Anne Stern and I live in Park Lane." "Park Lane?...I suppose you are no relation to Sir Albert and Lady Stern, I have not seen them since they were married." Anne said, "I am their daughter and we have been laughing about you."'

Sir Albert Stern would indeed have much to laugh about while observing Dil's exotic career as she struggled to survive in a world without butlers and footmen.

Sir Albert Stern was not only the Minister of Supply for most of the war but also head of Stern Brothers besides being a director of various banks in England and elsewhere. Like his wife, he was an old friend of Dil's from the days when 'Nannie Walker woke me up then aided by a footman she reappeared carrying a tin bath-tub and cans of boiling water which they set down before a blazing fire' to quote Dil's book. Albert Stern well understood how the German mark was out and how international markets were looking to the powerful American dollar. The RAF had bombed the houses in Berlin formerly rented out by Ellen and Frederika and they now looked for Dil's help to save their mother's American estate which Dil willingly undertook because Ellen was still certified and the LCC Receiver still did not know that the American estate existed.

Dil revelled in this sort of double-cross, and in the end it paid off handsomely since it was the Roosevelt connection that came to Dil's rescue when Anthony Blunt and I were totally unable to help her in 1965. But as Blunt and Guy Burgess saw it, being half-American Dil had a weakness for titles that was half of her undoing. She had a temper that matched her aggressive look, and she let Francis Rose into the know on too much official business. But Rose was also a violent character succinctly summed up by Cecil Beaton who wrote of the baronet in his diary, 'His life story is a long

succession of suicides, killings, fatal accidents. In his wake he brings chaos.'

If not insane herself, Frederika was hardly wise to be writing to her sister in the asylum such letters as these, on 23 August 1948, 'So that is the story of poor Edina Montgela, and her sister Anna, who was mad about the Führer, she thought him a God to the end, and poor creature, after the war came to an end and the Führer was said to have burned to death, Anna Montgela was found dead beside her bed one morning, dreadfully burned...some mysteriously hinted that her death had some psychological connection with the Führer's death.' On 20 March 1949 another letter she wrote to Ellen dealt with Frederika's sister-in-law, Countess Stolberg, Heinrich's sister, 'Hers was a terribly tragic life. She had 3 children, her elder son was the father of Anton. He became insane soon after his youngest daughter was born, and lived the rest of his life in asylums, he was very ill I believe. His sister, Gräfin Stolberg's only daughter, also became insane quite young, and died in a mental home not long before Gräfin Stolberg herself died. Her youngest son, who was terrifically neurotic was killed in the last fights of the war. Besides all this she was terrifically nationalistic and Nazi in her sympathies and suffered terribly when all she idealized went smash.'

The fact that Frederika wrote to her only sister about her sister-in-law, and used the title Gräfin, Countess, shows that Ellen, shut away from the grand Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsees knew neither them nor the way they idolised 'the Führer', another title Frederika used to the end. But the title used most frequently by Countess Frederika both when talking and in letter-writing was 'peasant' and many felt justice had been done after her death when a French 'peasant' friend of Halina Melynk-Kaluzynska successfully sued Frederika's vast estate.

Francis Rose liked to take the credit for having introduced the striking-looking diplomat, Heinrich Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee while staying with Dil in Berlin, to the young and beautiful half-American Frederika, who herself felt so unsure of marrying such a man with such a reputation in the Ernst Röhm-Francis Rose camp, that she took nearly two years of engagement before marrying. It was therefore Francis Rose's head that Ellen wanted to place on the window-sill and crush to death. It was Rose who brought Heinrich into Ellen's life, and because so many of Heinrich's family were long-stay inmates of mental institutions, Ellen had been sent to England to spare their feelings.

When Count Heinrich died on 19 February 1949 in the American Zone the German press, wanting to forget Hitler and the Nazis, ignored the death except for *Der Allgäuer* which under local news from the town of Tiefenbach said that the former diplomat who was at 'Vienna, Istanbul, Buckerest etc' had died and 'At the funeral, which was held last Monday amongst the big turn-

out were...' This account made no mention of the count's haughty widow and to repair this damage she inserted in many newspapers large death notices signed 'Frederika Gräfin zu Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee,' and to show where her allegiance lay she got the printer to use the nationalistic Gothic typeface introduced by the late Führer.

When she finally settled in Hampstead, Frederika told her neighbours for over thirty years there that her husband had quarrelled with Hitler while he, Heinrich, was the German Ambassador in Turkey. This lie served to cover up the Nazi sympathies and affiliations of both the count himself and of Frederika which would hardly have gone down well in that part of North London where so many Jewish refugees from Hitler's holocaust lived and whose memorial to their dead in Gladstone Park was so often desecrated by anti-Semites. Dil de Rohan, of course, was desperately longing to tell all in 1951 when revising her autobiography, but again the libel laws restricted her to the dead and she wrote, 'Occasionally in the course of my work tidings of those partial to the Germans would come my way. Scapini, French Ambassador to Berlin entertained Abetz and Stulpnagel in the Decour house in the Rue Francois Ier. Bettina Bergery, with whom I had worked at Schiaparelli was French Ambassadress in Ankara, where she played bridge with von Papen. We had just moved into our new abode when there was a call from the Ritz. Iya Abdy had arrived. She had escaped from France, walking three nights over the Pyrenees in her Pergua shoes, carrying a Briggs umbrella in one hand, and a cotton handkerchief full of jewels in the other.'

In his diary for 2 April 1944 James Lees-Milne recorded how he and Bridget Parsons went to lunch at the Ritz Grill and 'as she sat down she said querulously that Emerald and Sir Robert Abdy were joining us. This they did at 2 o'clock. Bridget rather surly with Emerald for coming.' Following my own meeting with Bridget Parsons and Emerald Cunard at the Ritz Grill in 1944 I would hear some words and read many letters from Bridget Parsons which at the least must be described as 'querulous.' And by the autumn of 1944 I knew what dangerous situations could arise from going to the Ritz with Dil to meet Iya Abdy, the ex-wife of Sir Robert Abdy.

Ex-wives, like ex-friends, often became present enemies, and Dil and Mary Oliver were not the only two women who liked to cut up rough in public. Bridget had long left Nancy Mitford at Heywood Hill's bookshop to work at the War Office, but Dil did not forget that Nancy Mitford had walked out of her partnership with Dil in order to join Bridget at Heywood Hill's. Ex-business partners, like ex-lovers often resort to revenge, in and out of the law courts. In those closing months of the war I could have no idea that much of my own business in the future, and right into the 1990s, would involve the swearing of affidavits about letters and quarrels even though I knew full well

while swearing them that no government, Tory or Labour, would ever allow a full trial before a jury.

While Bettina Bergery and von Papen played bridge in Ankara, Dil and Mary Oliver preferred the Tarot cards at Selwyn House and one weekend when I went up to London with smuggled goods from Barry, the telephone rang and an extremely angry Dil returned to announce that Francis Rose had 'gone and done it again.' But in my presence she would say no more against Rose until years later when his friend Buster Crabb disappeared inspecting the Russian leaders' warship. The incident of the phone call in Dil's flat occurred when I was already well into my opening term at the Barry School of Evangelism, and the first thing Principal Fidler learnt of what Francis Rose had 'gone and done it again' was when, totally unexpectedly, the Gospel caravan had to be removed from Baille Glas churchyard and parked in an orchard miles away at Crickhowell.

When my book *The Protege* was sent to Leonard Rosoman for him to design the jacket, the artist decided he would like the jacket to be of me as a 16 year old, with Abraham, a gypsy deserter from the army whose story I told in the book alongside that of Dennis Parry and Mrs Turner who had first taken me to the remote mountain cottage where Abraham hid by day and from where he went to rob the farms by night. Since Mrs Turner had photographed us all at the caravan I asked her to let me have some snaps for Leonard Rosoman. But the result badly shook Margaret Turner. The artist designed a marvellous book jacket but with an uncannily good likeness of Abraham which she felt would revive an old controversy best forgotten.

In 1962 Mrs Turner told me there was more than a little substance to the reports that Abraham had not only given some of his blood, as one of the 'Five Jewels of the Sacred Cow' in a black mass at Baille Glas Church, but that he had died from poisoning. The ritual of Tantric Hinduism requiring milk, dung, urine, meat and blood was widely varied by Aleister Crowley who was indeed into celebrating his love of female flesh as 'The Sacred Cow' but the Oxford version as celebrated by Maurice Bowra and Evan Tredegar gave scant consideration to female urine. But Evan and Francis Rose did share Crowley's liking for adding drugs such as laudanum to ensure a good response to those partaking of the skull-chalice. At Maindiff Court not far from the black masses in the deserted church, Hess had been complaining for two years to Dil's friend, the Swiss Minister, that he believed the British guards were poisoning him. Apart from some blood spots no trace of Abraham's body was ever seen by Mrs Turner who, with Sister Laura Rowlings, a recent graduate with Ian Paisley, now took over running the Gospel caravan. There was no inquest, only rumour.

So, at the little village of Llanover I had met for the first time a man who

numbered among Francis Rose's 'long succession of suicides, killings, fatal accidents.' Since the war was still on when Abraham disappeared and since Hess at Maindiff Court was too close to the scene for the comfort of the authorities it was not surprising that no inquest was held. But the war was long over when another of my Llanover acquaintances was also murdered by poisoning and though a great deal was written about the body that died surrounded by doctors and nurses at New End Hospital, Hampstead, the authorities refused to allow an inquest.

When Dennis Parry first went with the Gospel Caravan Mission to Wales in 1942, the police questioned him about a homosexual scandal in the neighbourhood which got into the press. Evan Tredegar felt great alarm when an ex-lover, Joe Ackerley, wrote in *The Spectator* about the police witch-hunt which led to gays committing suicide because of it.

When some of the soldiers from South Wales got posted to London they went to The Packenham pub close to Chelsea barracks. Although Jack Bryans kept a large London house he and I were often alone in it since Red Cross duty tours took his wife away and boarding school their only child. So we joined his business friends at The Packenham and I quickly realised that many of the well-heeled captains of industry drank at that particular pub to do business with the Guardsmen via way of caning. I could not resist writing a send-up lyric about 'The boys at the Packenham who do it by whacking them' which a friend, Derek Waterlow, set to music.

The 1960 suggestion by Jack's brother Max that I should write a book about the Bryans family led me to suppose that its main theme would be the dominating influence of Lonsdale Bryans and his peace mission on behalf of the anti-Hitler German Resistance. In 1989 Max wrote to me about his uncle, Ernest Bryans, 'I had never any idea' of what Tom Driberg and Tom's homosexual friends were doing at Oxford where Max was a 'rowing hearty.' Through Max's suggestion about a book, I kept his and Jack's letters and in my replies mentioned our mutual friends, including those from 1944 at The Packenham who twenty years later would be photographed with Jack and me at the Portuguese Ambassador's reception for my book about the Azores.

Many of the friends I first met in the war now regard those times as the good old days when rich and poor snuggled into air-raid shelters and sang rousing songs in pubs, while others whose names would feature in High Court actions, made a fortune out of war production, such as Jack Bryans's research for the Royal Air Force whose fighter-bombers Max had directed to the Italian marshalling yards. Max wrote to me that he felt 'safer with carpenters than Kings' and he probably did since the short-reigned Edward VIII was hardly a model of virtue as the wartime Governor of the Bahamas. Nor did the Duchess of Windsor help matters, for her behaviour gave anti-American

writers all the ammunition they needed to blast her not so much as a duchess but as an American adventuress, conveniently forgetting that some of the most unprincipled rogues were English aristocrats in search of American heiresses. Jimmy Donahue summed up the Windsors' milieu when he told the New York press that the duchess was 'marvellous. The best cocksucker I've ever known.'

Marriage connected Jack Bryans to the Wills family and he knew that Mrs Mabel Wills had got out her cheque book to bring me from Ireland to that part of Wales for long the territory of her evangelical partner Sibella Bryans, wife of Canon Lonsdale Bryans of Brecon Cathedral. Around Brecon, prisoners of war and Allied servicemen outnumbered the village children who sought amusement in baiting Dennis Parry, or food at the Baille Glas Church vestry, or sensation in waiting for the top prisoner, Hess, to go by with his guards. I loved putting poached eggs into plates of spinach for 'the Italian prisoners of war going home to their camp. Their dignified, chocolate-coloured cloaks struck a curiously autumnal note in the blue-grey landscape' as I described them in *The Protege*.

In the same book I told how sighs of relief as well as prayers went heavenwards when Dennis Parry departed for Africa and of the ensuing six weeks I spent at the caravan in the hills alone except for army deserters and Italian prisoners, until the ex-seaman Edwin Coulson came to brighten my churchyard existence with his passion for all things American. Nevertheless I enjoyed my weekly jaunts to London with pheasants and Hess-news for Dil de Rohan and evenings with Jack Bryans at The Packenham.

Like most old sailors, Jack seemed broadminded, but not enough for him to like his fellow-salt Lord Mountbatten, and not enough to prevent shock when Jack read what other Royal Navy people wrote about Mountbatten's wild parties for sailors. But Jack who after all had taken me as a sixteen-year old missionary student to The Packenham, got really irate on reading in John Costello's *Mask of Treachery* about the connection some of those Packenham friends had with Buckingham Palace and quoting my Packenham send-up lyric.

The soldiers not only serviced their rich clients by flagellation and other forms of humiliation, but for a further fee would appear in pornographic photography which sometimes led to courts martial. But as money, especially in wartime, could buy silence, and since Lord Tredegar was particularly rich, *The Spectator* carried no reports of what Evan and his soldier friends got up to in South Wales though deaths described as suicides did get into print. But the war was over when Evan met his fate, not as a summons to the criminal courts but as his dismissal from the court of his beloved Queen Mary.

Evan Tredegar had influenced Brendan Bracken for so long that when

he became Minister of Information Bracken mistakenly believed that Hitler and Goebbels shared Hess's dependence on astrology. But just as Dennis Parry took the sign of the Great Beast as 666 from the Bible, so Hitler engaged a Swiss astrologist, Karl Ernst Krafft, to study the prophesies of Nostradamus and serve them up as Nazi propaganda for the horoscope-loving British.

But the Führer took care not to serve them up for home consumption. In 1983 Nostradamus's riddles in verse appeared in a translation by Jean-Charles de Fontbrune and I wrote in the *Irish Press*, 'Amongst the most striking, for example, are the Hitler predictions. He forecasts Hitler's birth, talks of the gas chambers and accurately cites the dictator's death at the age of fifty-five years and ten months. Indeed in 1940 the Gestapo banned his book because it forecast Germany's defeat.'

Hitler also consulted Gurdjieff whose supposed daughter, Mary Oliver, together with her friend Dil de Rohan, read the Tarot cards for Sir George Catlin, 'one of the world's leading political philosophers,' at Pembroke Lodge before Mary and Dil got their jobs in Bracken's Ministry of Information. But it had been Katusha with whom Dil had lived openly as lesbians in Berlin where they knew the sexual preferences of those who ran the German armed forces, and later Dil fed those 'scabrous details' to Ellic Howe who organised BBC broadcasts to Hitler's fighting forces. In its 23 October 1991 obituary of Ellic Howe the *Daily Telegraph* noted, 'The Germans lapped them up, but the greatest care had to be taken to prevent such smut reaching the prim Wykehamical ears of Sir Stafford Cripps.'

The Cripps family not only figured among Anglican clergy but several generations had served the Church of England as lawyers, Stafford's father, the 1st Lord Parmoor, having been Chancellor and Vicar General of York from 1900 to 1941, as well as being an MP. His eldest son, Seddon, the 2nd Lord Parmoor, practised at the Bar before going as Bursar to Queen's College, Oxford, where his physical endowments as well as family fortune, made him popular with young curates who liked the crack of the whip. Seddon's experience as a barrister caused him to be consulted about the 'witch hunt' around Abergavenny, and he came to Baille Glas Church to find out about Hess's condition, although this visitation might well have been a front for his interest in a soldier who deserted because of the witch-hunt.

Seddon Parmoor thought highly of the Chichester Cathedral Canons who denied their bishop, George Bell, access to his own pulpit for fear that he would again sabotage the British 'war effort' by continuing his denunciation of the 'mass bombing of German workers.' Seddon would have his sexual preference and his wealth questioned in the law courts when he disinherited a High Church Canon of Chichester Cathedral, and left money instead to the Salvation Army, while the bereft Canon made headlines himself

when he committed suicide.

Everybody on all sides playing war games used their Old Boy networks. Hitler consulted Gurdjieff who had been a theological student at Tiflis Seminary with his friend Joseph Vissarionovich Djughashvili, later known to Hitler and the world as Joseph Stalin. Hitler knew that Gurdjieff wanted to set up his headquarters in London and that the British Government refused to allow it because Gurdjieff had a record of spying and intrigue. Dennis Parry and others took Biblical numerology seriously and really believed that Hitler would win the war through being the Book of Revelation's 'Great Beast' whose number was 666.

Lonsdale Bryans's *Blind Victory* gives an example of prophetic word play that was doing the international rounds and which he saw during his 1939 visit to Rome, 'I was shown a clever little conundrum, somewhat on the lines of an acrostic, which was popular at the time - and is not without a prophetic aspect in the light of subsequent events. It consisted of four names - those of the leaders of Italy, Germany, Britain and France - written one underneath the other, followed by the query *chi vincera?* - who will win? The answer lay hidden in the third letters of each word, reading down from the top, which spelt the name of the future would-be conqueror of Europe - as follows:

M	U	S	S	O	L	I	N	I		
H	I	T	L	E	R					
C	H	A	M	B	E	R	L	A	I	N
D	A	L	A	D	I	E	R			
C	H	I								
V	I	N	C	E	R	A	?			

Although Lonsdale Bryans had business in Milan where his book on anthropological sociology was being translated into Italian, the British Foreign Office letter to its embassy in Rome stated, 'Lord Halifax wishes to facilitate the journey to and return from Rome of Mr J. Lonsdale Bryans.'

In August 1939 Lonsdale Bryans returned to London from one of his long trips to the Far East of which he wrote, 'I was returning home from Singapore, having spent the winter in Hong-Kong and the Dutch East Indies, moving on later to Sarawak in which pre-war paradise I passed three delectable months as the guest of Mr Anthony Brooke, at that time the reigning Rajah Muda.' Lonsdale Bryans, older than Evan Tredegar by only a few weeks, became his contemporary at Eton and Oxford and both loved arriving by yacht to enjoy Tony Brooke's hospitality.

Ill health obliged Lonsdale to abandon his ambition to be a professional diplomat but he nevertheless had strong connections with the Foreign Office. As soon as he landed in 1939 Lonsdale walked from his club to the Foreign Office and met Lord Halifax coming down the main staircase. Although only

a chance meeting, Foreign Secretary Halifax made a note in the official minutes saying he was 'rather impressed', for of course both men had many interests in common especially religion.

The first Lord Parmoor became Chancellor and Vicar General of York in 1900 when he took over from the first Lord Grimthorpe who had held the post since 1877. In 1845 Lord Grimthorpe had married Fanny Lonsdale, the Bishop of Lichfield's daughter, hence Lonsdale Bryans's Christian name after his great-grandfather, Bishop Lonsdale. Lord Halifax was not only a distinguished politician but also a pillar of the Anglican Church and in the House of Lords that other pillar, Lord Grimthorpe, could be relied upon to support Halifax. Lonsdale's many Anglican connections impressed Halifax but so did the fact that the globe-trotter was a relation of Countess zu Munster von Derneburg with whom Lonsdale spent long periods at her medieval Schloss Derneburg in Germany, thereby being in a good position to gain the confidence of the old aristocrats who did not like Hitler and who therefore joined the German Resistance against the Führer.

Although the full story will not be told until the Hess papers are released in AD 2017, much can be learnt from **The Von Hassell Diaries** where Lonsdale Bryans appears as 'Mr X.' Lonsdale Bryans dedicated his book **Blind Victory** 'To "Charles" (Matt.V.9).' Charles was the code-name for Ulrich von Hassell and the Scriptural verse runs, 'Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.'

Lonsdale Bryans wrote, 'True to form, therefore, they let slip this unique opportunity of arriving at a solution of the European problem, provided by the amazing fact that a German of the international stature of Baron Hassell came across the frontier into Switzerland in the first year of war as an Ambassador of Peace. And "Peace with Honour" - not like that travesty of peace proffered a year later by the Nazi neurasthenic, Rudolf Hess...'

Hess caused acute embarrassment since his affairs cut across so many Old Boy Networks. Evan Tredegar and several of Churchill's ministers had been to Eton and Oxford with Lonsdale Bryans, but only one of them, as well as being there later, had also formed the Bryans connection with building aircraft and its pre-war counterpart in Germany, namely the 14th Duke of Hamilton who was a group-captain commanding an RAF fighter group when Hess landed by parachute to discuss peace plans with the duke.

Harold Nicolson had the clearest perception of the situation at the Ministry of Information where he worked for a time, 'From the start the new Ministry was riddled with jealousies and intrigues... Apart from antagonistic personalities the Ministry was not favoured by the press, the BBC or the public.' Lonsdale Bryans had been recommended by Lord Halifax to the Ministry of Information before Brendan Bracken took over as minister. And

whereas Brendan had boasted of being an Australian and not Irish when he met Evan Tredegar in 1923, Lonsdale made much of his own Irish background and wanted poorer scions of the Bryans clan, such as myself, to come to England. He and I drifted apart later when my books with their accounts of the Bryans working-class background met with a good press, so leaving me no time to spend on books which Lonsdale could never get published.

And then Lonsdale's devotion to his Etonian friend, Evan Tredegar, also intervened when Evan's life-style, especially vis-a-vis the royal family, came to an abrupt end for which I was blamed because of my Noel Coward-type send-up of the ruling classes, and in particular of such people as Lonsdale and Evan who could sail off in yachts to spend their winters in the Far East. In the end, Lonsdale dismissed me as an upstart from the slums of Belfast since I blasphemed in public against his sacred friends in high places who equated literary genius with male homosexuality.

Brendan Bracken had to lie about his birth and religion to get into publishing, but in the war, as Minister of Information, Brendan recognised the importance of knowing the truth about Hess's strange behaviour and who had been who in the sinister Berlin household run by Ernst Röhm and his English boyfriend, Sir Francis Rose. Bracken was an opportunist and realised that Evan Tredegar and Lonsdale Bryans, Hess and Röhm, Dil de Rohan and Mary Oliver, indulged more in this world's affairs than in occultism.

Bracken created a big stir in the American press in 1943 by claiming that Hess had known the Duke of Hamilton before the war. After Hess flew to see the duke on a peace mission in 1941, Sir Archibald Sinclair, the Minister of Air, publicly announced that Hess had never met Hamilton. But the head of Bracken's Swiss department, Princess Carlos de Rohan, as the former ward of Lord Ernest Hamilton, knew who had sat at her dinner table in Berlin when Nazi leaders came with bigger fry than Sir Francis Rose.

Houses On The Sand

Three star performers who numbered among the Barry School of Evangelism's wartime alumni were Ian Paisley in Ulster, Dennis Parry in Africa and Paul Tucker who won enough laurels to get himself invited back to the school as its Chairman of the Executive Council. Amongst the first things I did when the term began was to go with Paul Tucker to his home in Bath for his twenty-first birthday. That celebration finally convinced me that I would never be able to, or want to, talk like an evangelical. Paul Tucker could and did, and his renowned preaching at the East London Tabernacle and training of Baptist ministers in Ulster are witness to this.

Paul's obituary for the Barry school president in 1965 assured readers that, 'Mr. T. Lawton Loveridge was a man upon whose personality was impressed the fragrance and strength of Christ. Prominent as a business man he was more prominent as a Christian whose life at every point was under the sway of the Lordship of Christ. Those who knew him best were conscious that here was a man who lived in the secret place of the Most High. To sit at his feet when he was ministering the Word was to be aware of the freshness of his spiritual experience. With Mr. Loveridge there were no wasted words - great grace was upon his utterances.'

When Katie Stewart sent a copy of my poem *Thyself* to her neighbour Lawton Loveridge, he was outraged that I, an evangelical student, should write of Evan as 'spirit of the woods, so pure, so free.' Was I not aware that Lord Tredegar was a well-known Satanist who would not even allow the spirits of the dead to rest in peace? Poor, pompous Lawton Loveridge, like many, totally misunderstood the distinctions between various sorts of supernatural activities. Evan's familiar was Meg, the Welsh witch who tried to faith-heal the sick and bring rest to houses haunted by restless ghosts. As Irish authors have shown, Evan engaged in exorcism, as indeed Anglican clergy still do, and his beloved Meg was certainly no *maleficus*, working evil in the Satanist manner against people.

I did not much mind censure by Lawton Loveridge for plainly he did not realise that a sixteen year old youth wrote poetry to record feelings, not to report facts. Paul Tucker got it right about Lawton Loveridge being 'prominent as a business man' with his shipping interests that peaked during the years when Willie Pethybridge and Lloyd George were selling honours and turning Cardiff into the City of Dreadful Knights. Perhaps the big businessman had long ago forgotten, if he ever experienced, adolescent

emotions in writing poetry. At any rate, Lawton Loveridge did not quarrel with Katie Stewart over *Thyself*. After all for nearly forty years Katie gave her services free of charge as Mrs Wills's assistant in running the Christian Alliance for Women and Girls, though before Paul Tucker wrote his obituary, Lawton Loveridge had seen both the Christian Girls' Hostel and the Wills house become annexes of the Barry School of Evangelism.

But being such a good Christian with a businessman's head for figures, Loveridge had no doubt that I could be used in the Lord's service. Everyone expressed their amazement at the change, bordering on the miraculous, wrought in Sister Agnes since she laughed for the first time in years at Dennis Parry's and my attempts to harness the pony. She had spent several happy weeks with Margaret Turner at Ty-cock Farm and now came for a further week to see her former flat-mate and closest friend, Mrs Fidler.

Forty years had passed since the Great Welsh Revival, when Canon Stewart and Admiral de Courcy-Hamilton had been such bright sparks for the Lord, but Lawton Loveridge knew that not once in those four decades had either of the Fidlers been socially invited to Katie Stewart's house. This resulted rather less from snobbery than from feelings of mistrust and a fear of confrontation between Principal Fidler and the principal Catholic of the neighbourhood, Lord Tredegar. To atone for this lapse of Christian charity, Loveridge himself laid on a meal and so the two Fidlers, Mrs Turner, Sister Agnes and I set off early and walked through some fields singing evangelical choruses. A Friesian herd complete with bull grazed the fields and I thought it right to warn of this. But at the mere mention of 'bull' the always-nervous Mrs Fidler stopped singing and started running followed by the others.

When they realised the bull had ignored us, Sister Agnes joined me on the gate and began laughing helplessly which set the others off too, so much so that Mrs Fidler, to use a euphemism then in common use, 'Wet herself.' As Principal Fidler watched the yellow stream run down the road, mortification and fury rushed in turns across his seldom-expressive face. Addressing his wife harshly in Welsh, he dragged her away and when a bus came he stopped it and returned to the school. From that day Principal Fidler had doubts about my calling as a missionary. He had instilled such fear into Sister Agnes for harbouring lesbian feelings for Mrs Fidler and now here was I, not only having brought poor Agnes out of the years of misery and guilt over her homosexuality, but I had caused the Matron of the famous Bible School to be seen urinating in a public place because of my frivolous behaviour. I had laughed too much and made others do so too, therefore I must be of the Devil and would need great guidance over my spiritual life.

Conspicuous by their absence from these sorts of outings were Vice Principal Dalling and his wife. They had caused eyebrows to be raised when

they moved into their flat and installed a bathroom, for having lived on faith they were rich enough to indulge such cleanliness next to their godliness as well as to pay my fees, and indeed, because of this financial provision Mrs Dalling thought she had some prior claim on me. But having paid the fees without first seeing me, difficulties arose when the Rev Dalling asked me to read the lessons at the Wilberforce Hall, the grandest of the Navy Missions built by Frederick de Courcy-Hamilton where the Anglican form of service was still used as in the other halls.

My performance displeased the Vice Principal for there was precious little grace in my utterance of the Scripture. He felt I had let the side down and walking back to the school afterwards he assured me that he, in his capacity as head of the English department, had an uphill task ahead, and that I should take extra elocution lessons with his wife. My worst blunder seemed to have been saying 'what-err' in the Irish fashion instead of water, even though I had never spoken with a heavy Ulster brogue. However, the Vice Principal thought I was 'a real Paddy' and I completely and proudly agreed, for my Irish background was now beginning to serve me well.

Dalling's attack on my vowels had the opposite effect to the one he intended and finally turned me into 'a real Paddy' and it now pleased me when my friends such as Katie Stewart began calling me Paddy.

I duly took elocution lessons with the childless, kind-hearted Mrs Dalling but the result of this Pygmalion's effort, though effectively keeping the rain mainly on plains in Spain, were heard as a mockery of the Vice Principal's Cambridge accent on the one hand and more like the wicked Lord Tredegar's high-camp, Oxford voice on the other. When I went to Paul Tucker's birthday party in Bath, I could announce in the most arch voice imaginable 'I'm going to take the waters at Bath!' I had already been made aware of the glottal stop of Irish 'water' in Fermanagh where my 'Malone' voice differed enough from the Fermanagh accent to make some people compare it with Lord Haw-Haw. Evan Tredegar, of course, derived great amusement from all of this. He knew I was sending-up those who baited me because of my Irish, non-public school voice, which he liked. He was equally delighted when people began to think I was one of his Stewart relations, if not Evan's actual son.

This belief received further encouragement when I started wearing Evan's clothes. I already had sombre suits from Belfast but now in the afternoons during the school's free period, I was off on my bicycle in Evan's blazers and knickerbockers to have tea with Katie Stewart and her relations. Most of these were her late mother, Lady Beatrice's rich and titled nephews beside Evan.

No outsider knew the Stewart household and circle better than Brendan

Bracken, the Minister of Information. Although Brendan loved talking to me about the dramas caused in High Churches by Winston Churchill's aunt, Lady Wimborne, he also enjoyed gossiping about another Barry family which included nephews of both Lady Beatrice Stewart as well as of Mrs Winston Churchill, namely Esmond and Giles Romilly. Esmond hit the headlines in the 1930s when he went off to the Spanish Civil War with Jessica Mitford and the British government sent a warship to bring her back, rather in the same way that Prime Minister Peel had sent the young Gladstone to retrieve Lady Lincoln a century before. Her sister, Unity Mitford, got deeply involved with Hitler.

Before he departed for Africa, Brecon Cathedral featured as one of the main targets in Dennis Parry's holy war against unsaved clergy. He littered the cathedral with **Cuckoo in the Nest** and other choice pieces from Percival Petter's pen. The clergy whom Dennis successfully outraged included Canon John Lonsdale Bryans who had been a close friend of Evan's uncle, Canon Henry Stewart. Canon Bryans spent most of the 70 years of his clerical life in South Wales and much of his success beyond his parishes came from the popularity of his wife Sibella's writing for the Mothers' Union and Young Women's Bible Classes, published by the long-established Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge which certainly did not issue the writings of her nephew Lonsdale, either about Hess or the evolution of man.

Brendan Bracken knew Evan Tredegar's domestic background as well as the globe-trotting exploits of Evan and Lonsdale Bryans. More than the National Union of Protestants objected to Brendan Bracken appointing the Church of England's bishops and deans and to his vendetta against George Bell, the poet Bishop of Chichester who wanted the release of Pastor Niemöller from prison and limits set to the RAF bombing of German cities.

On 11 September 1979 I wrote to Eric Kemp, the present Bishop of Chichester, 'As I mentioned on Sunday, I have personal reasons for gratitude to you for having brought Pastor Niemöller over to Chichester for the unveiling of the Bell Memorial, for on many occasions I shared pulpits and hospitality with his wartime friends who organised the mission to the Jews. Although it was Canon Jack Lonsdale Bryans (born in 1853) who introduced me to Niemöller's friends, I cannot forget that it was the other Jack Bryans, still living, who invented and mass-produced RAF equipment in his Surrey factory during the same World War Two.'

As I lay unconscious in a Brighton hospital while Southern Television and BBC Radio put out bulletins on my chances of survival, Bishop Kemp informed my family that my affairs were in 'higher hands' meaning the Attorney General, Sam Silkin. In its obituary of Silkin the **Daily Telegraph** stated, 'many regarded his term as Attorney General as one of the least

distinguished in modern history.' Sam was born in South Wales in 1918, the grandson of a Lithuanian Jewish emigre. The family so prospered that Sam, his father and brother had the unique experience of being Privy Councillors sitting simultaneously in Parliament.

If the evangelical writings of Sibella Bryans did not disturb the Silkin family in South Wales, in 1951 Sam was a rising barrister when Lonsdale Bryans published **Blind Victory: Secret communications**. Many Tories, as well as Labour MPs of Jewish stock, thought it unwise, and certainly untimely, for Lonsdale to write of his German peace missions after six million Jews had perished. The book was deliberately offensive to Stalin's Russia. I am sorry neither Sam Silkin nor Lonsdale Bryans lived to see Stalin debunked by his own people and his exposure as another exterminator of millions.

My Irish identity became of prime importance to my work not only as an author but also because it had sinister political overtones, for not only did Evan Tredegar like going to Ireland to demonstrate his talents as a medium in seances for Yeats, but he liked to stay at Classiebawn Castle with Lord Louis Mountbatten who in the spy-hunting heyday of the 1980s would be accused, and I believe wrongly, of having been involved in the Hess peace mission run by Lonsdale Bryans.

From 1944 to 1988 I remained on friendly terms with Canon Lonsdale Bryans's family, always having the distinction at gatherings of being the sole Bryans present to have been born in Ireland. Several times during the war the canon's nephew Jack invited me to meals at Bryans Aero-Equipment Ltd in Mitcham which he and his brother Max founded. On the basis of those meals, in **Conspiracy of Silence**, the authors ridiculously assert I had 'worked for a time' at the Bryans factory, even though I had shown the authors my correspondence with Jack on our wartime meetings.

Jack's brother Max wrote to me on 8 February 1986, 'Poor Uncle Ernest, he did get mixed up with some strange folk as well.' Ernest Bryans considered himself an expert on the Mitford family because the exotic sisters' even more exotic father, Lord Redesdale had, in 1891, joined the Bryans House at Radley as David Bertram Ogilvy Freeman-Mitford. Ernest felt proud to have been the first editor of the **Radley Register** in 1897 which contained brief sketches of every former pupil since the school's foundation in 1847. By the time I reached 87 Banbury Road in 1944 to see Ernest extend his shaky hand to former alumni, many of them in uniform, the editor was the Rev Vyvyan Hope, who had been recommended many years before by Henrietta Hope's son, the Duke of Newcastle who for long had sat on the school's council. Keeping the **Radley Register** up to date with old boys calling in for an ever ready glass of whisky, simply provided a front for many of them because most of the talk at Banbury Road about the various war

fronts, including the continual sex one, never went into print.

Although death had removed the Duke of Newcastle from his seat on the Radley Council his widow, Oscar Wilde's 'My Duchess', still held court at Forest Farm, Windsor, and much enjoyed it when the Provost of Eton College, Lord Quickswood, came up to play bridge and talk about the latest outrageous assaults by Petter's National Union of Protestants on High Churches founded by Alexander Beresford-Hope, uncle of both the Duke of Newcastle and of Linky Quickswood. The latter, cast firmly in the mould of a 'confirmed bachelor' had been the best man at Winston Churchill's wedding in 1908 and liked to help Brendan Bracken sort out which High Church bishops and deans Winston Churchill should appoint in defiance of Percival Petter's National Union of Protestants' inevitably furious response in Barry, Belfast and elsewhere.

Few old boys returned to Eton College with such enthusiasm as Guy Burgess despite being a Russian spy. Adeline de la Feld could no longer be found at Forest Farm writing against Mussolini for Communist magazines, yet the house remained a great place for Guy and the High Church authority, Tom Driberg, to pick up Right-wing information about such people as Evan Tredegar and Evan's former protege Brendan Bracken, who was Dil de Rohan's boss and who was supposed to be assisted by Guy Burgess. The bitter in-fighting between the Ministry of Information people was concerned rather less with Left and Right-wing politics than with their sexual affairs, and from the deletions the government have made to my own books as well as those interviews I have given to other authors, I am aware that my letters to and from Dil's former but still-living colleagues cannot yet be published.

Meanwhile, in 1944, the Duchess of Newcastle's two neighbours, the Schroder sisters, had decamped to their Scottish estate while the aged Ernest Bryans passed on to anybody who would listen, the views held by his old Radleian, Lord Redesdale, on his daughters' relations with Hitler and Princess de Rohan. Bad blood had replaced the once happy business partnership between Dil and Nancy Mitford, and Francis Rose entertained or annoyed Dil's visitors by hotly denying Unity Mitford's story that her adored Hitler had burst into Ernst Röhm's room screaming '*Schuft, du bist verhaftet*' (Wretch, you are under lock and key).

A number of authors have written about Evan Tredegar's arrogance and rudeness which led to quarrels and threats of suicide. With his mother hidden away on her bird's nest in Honeywood House outside Dorking, Evan regarded his cousin Katie Stewart as head of his family in Wales and he showered every kindness on her, so there was never such a 'stand-up row' as the Duke of Bedford witnessed between Evan and Lady Cunard. But Evan was a showman whether as a papal chamberlain wearing gorgeous robes in

Westminster Cathedral or ordering drinks all round in an East End pub if he was in a good mood. His moods, however, swung dramatically, especially after he had enjoyed sex-and-whipping sessions after which he had to have his period of sackcloth and ashes before a bloodied crucifix.

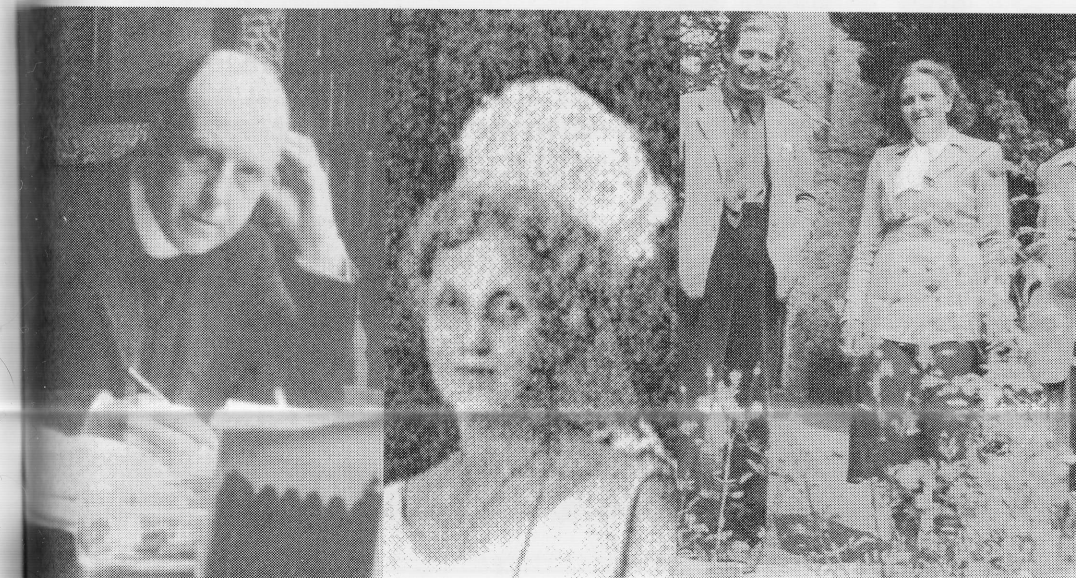
Although Evan kept up with both Emerald Cunard and Bridget Parsons from former days when Bridget and her brother Michael Rosse were the pride of London ballrooms as they did the Charleston, I never felt at ease when the bossy Lady Cunard and the 'querulous' Lady Parsons were at the Ritz. Like Emerald Cunard, Evan often insulted restaurant staff about the wartime food for which the waiters could not possibly be held accountable. After all-night parties or meeting Augustus John, Francis Rose and other cronies at the Cafe Royal, Evan liked to be seen taking his friends to breakfast at the Ritz. Food rationing at that period of the war had become severe and when a polite young waiter asked if His Lordship would like an egg for breakfast, Evan demanded in his most supercilious and irritating manner that eggs and bacon be brought. When the silver tray appeared Evan was still fuming and I jumped up just in time to stop him emptying the breakfast platter over the waiter.

Evan and I started fighting and inflicting actual bodily harm before the others separated us. I am fully aware that I have an Irish temper but it was a surprise indeed when I heard Helen Patterson in a 1989 BBC broadcast describe my fight with our headmaster in 1940. Likewise it surprised me when in **Conspiracy of Silence**, Barrie Penrose told of me 'throwing a water carafe at a barrister' but Penrose made no mention of the story written by that other reporter, John Francis, which related how Penrose himself got thrown out of the same court for trying to obtain information that was injunctioned. But as John Francis wrote, I was elated with what resulted from throwing the water carafe, because in the confusion, the High Court made a mistake and sent me the barrister's brief which, of course, I was not supposed to see. And no wonder, for the brief revealed that my action was being secretly dealt with by the Attorney General himself, and that he would not allow, and could not allow Anthony Blunt to go into the witness box because Blunt had been given immunity.

Although I do not recall Blunt being at Dil de Rohan's flat in 1944, the news of my fight with Evan at the Ritz pleased Guy Burgess and Brian Howard no end. Dil herself, who never hesitated to give a man a bloody nose in public, seemed to respect me for daring to stand up to the bully who made his vast fortune out of coalmines and East End slums. It was, however, only when Mary Herbert's brother John kicked the 'Tredegar miner upstart' Nye Bevan in the pants that matters got into print. Because of the war and because I had used such highly-charged language such as that Evan was mad and worse than Hess at Maindiff Court, the police took no action in the court. But



When in London Mabel Wills stayed with an uncle, Dr Stamford Felce of St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, and his daughter Lady Emmeline Handover, many times Lady Mayoress of Paddington (below centre). Rev Stanley Blunt (below left) became Vicar of St John's, Paddington, in 1921. When his son Anthony died in St John's parish in 1983, Father Thaddeus Birchard conducted the funeral. Since Paddington had become part of Westminster City Council, Father Birchard enjoyed having Lord Mayor Anne Mallison (above right with R B) to open church affairs. Lady Mayoress Handover delighted when Winston Churchill moved to Paddington and his Irish friend Brendan Bracken (above left) became a Paddington MP in 1929. He lost his seat in 1945 and went to fight the Bournemouth by-election against Edward Shackleton, son of explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton whose friend and biographer was Harold Avery, a cousin of Mabel Wills. At Bournemouth, Bracken was supported by the Churchill family trustee Risdon Bennett and R B (below right). After Bracken died in 1958, Shackleton became Labour's Leader in the House of Lords and his letters with R B featured in a number of High Court actions.





The Pelham-Clinton-Hope ducal seat Clumber was pulled down in 1938 and the public can now see some of its relics at More House in London which Adrian Hope bought in 1892. His grandson, Felix Hope-Nicholson (below left with R B) until his death in 1990 kept the house as his Hope grandparents had it. R B (above left) holding the 1637 Book of Common Prayer sent by Charles I to Sir Thomas Hope whose portrait is above the fireplace with the 18th century Thomas Hope clock under the picture. At the age of 9 Hermione Baddeley made her stage debut at More House and picture (above right) shows her in 1972 with George Balcombe. Lady Diana Pelham and R B on their engagement in 1949 (below right.)



Gwen Le Gallienne, painter and sculptor (above centre) known as 'The Baron', sketched her Paris friends Ernest Hemingway (above left) and James Joyce (above right). The love of her life was Louise Bryant, wife of the American Ambassador to France, Bill Bullitt, who lent his house to the honeymooning Duke and Duchess of Windsor, much to Gwen's annoyance since the former divorcee, Mrs Simpson, talked too much about Gwen's family divorces. Gwen's father, Roland Hinton Perry, had sculpted the Fountain of Neptune for the Library of Congress and did other major works. He went to prison rather than pay alimony when his wife went off with the English poet Richard Le Gallienne (below left) when Gwen was bridesmaid and the drunk Richard responded to the priest's 'Do you take this woman ...?' with 'You bet I do' before passing out. Revived, the poet wanted to fight his best man. Even in old age The Baron was always ready to remove her monocle before giving any man the weight of her stick. Below right, in 1967 on her last pub-crawl with R B.

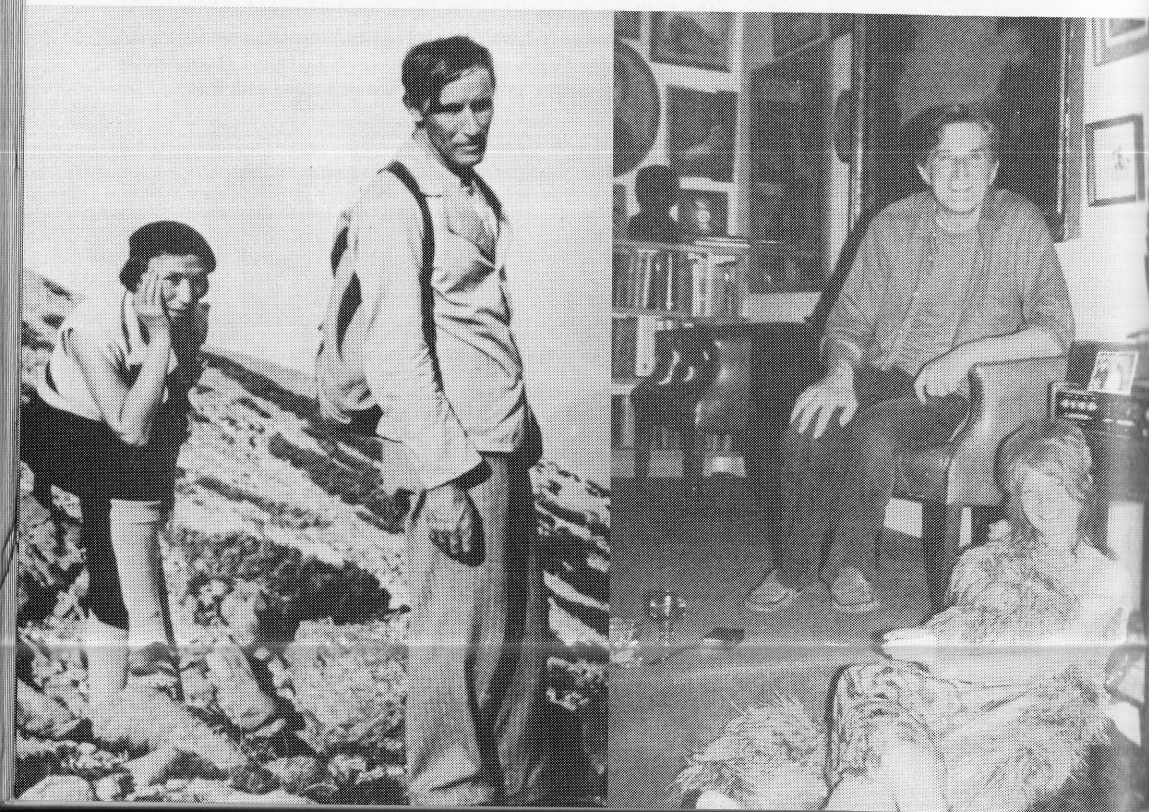




The architect Oscar Niemeyer outside the wooden hut where he designed the presidential palaces and other famous buildings of Brasilia, talking to R B (above left). They both liked travelling to the Interior to visit the straw hut of this tribal Brazilian dancing a welcome (above right). Beryl de Zoete, the authority on dance in the Indian sub-continent and Bali, had difficulty in keeping up in the Swiss Alps with her partner Arthur Waley, the poet and Chinese scholar (below left). Ruth Lakofski, architect and artist (below right with R B) has a particular interest in Brazilians.



For over 30 years before Granshagh Orange Hall was built, Grand Master Lord Erne's brethren met in Grahams' ungrand farmhouse. In 1941 R B was an evacuee there and wrote about it in **Song of Erne** and in 1965 returned there with a BBC Television unit to film his wartime friends in castle and cottage. In 1947 R B took Lord Erne's grandson Pud Grosvenor to see the stable block of a burnt-down castle on Ely Island which Pud bought, converted and kept as his home even after becoming 5th Duke of Westminster. For their sympathetic view of Roman Catholics, the duke and his trustee Michael Crichton got thrown out of the local Unionist Party. The 83 year old James Graham (above left), his sister Lizzie picking cabbages (above right). The converted stables, Ely Island (below left). Granshagh farmhouse built in 1892 with stones from the burnt-down Nixon Hall nearby (below right).





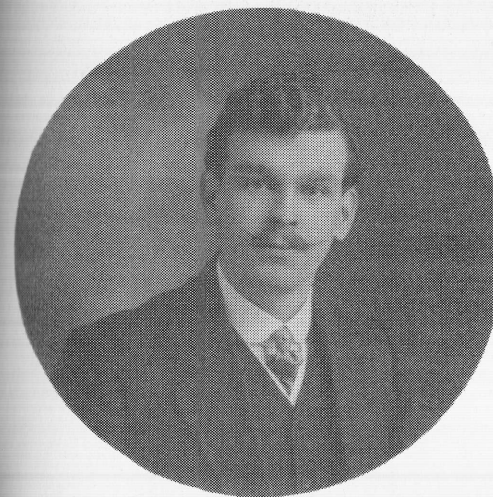
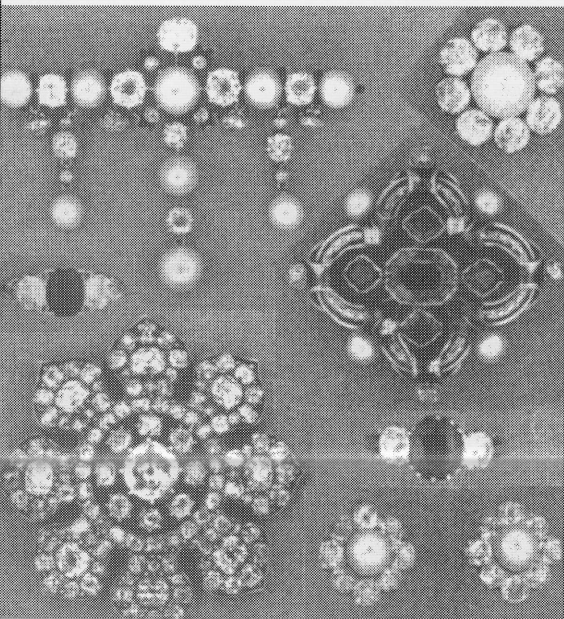
Dublin-born author James Hanley (above left with wife Tim) wrote of a homosexually assaulted teenage sailor in **Boy** and faced a successful obscenity prosecution to the outrage of his friend E M Forster (above right) who wrote that novelist Forrest Reid (below left) was 'the most important man in Belfast.' For years the most important boy in Forrest Reid's life was Kenneth Hamilton (below right with his sister Grace) until Kenneth joined the navy as a teenager, later to vanish without trace in the Australian outback.

Apostles of Temperance - Bishop John MacNeice of Belfast (above left) his friend Rector Charles Maguire with a Band of Hope in the Civil Temperance Parade (above right). In 1919 Charles Maguire led Unionist delegates to the USA to explain plans for Sir Edward Carson's new state of Northern Ireland. The bishop's son, poet Louis MacNeice (below left with wife) drank too much with his closest school friend Anthony Blunt (below right) the Russian spy and also a parson's son. Louis wrote 'Anthony too had a father a clergyman and we both resented the fact that our parents assumed us to be Christian.'



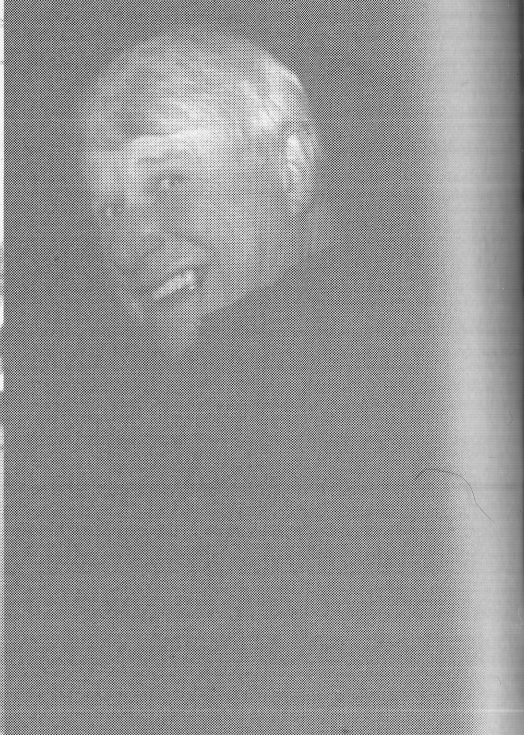


Washington's Smithsonian Institute hypnotises crowds by its fabled Hope diamond stolen from an Indian temple in the 1640s and said to have a jinx which caused violent deaths and disasters to its owners including two royal families. In 1818 Thomas Hope had his mausoleum consecrated and in 1957 his descendant, the Duke of Newcastle, had it buried in earth to roof-level to keep grave-robbers from its valuables. Above left, George Balcombe and bearded Daniel Schorno with their dogs in 1986 inspect the latest attempt to ransack the Hope tomb. The 88 year old Adeline de la Feld in Canada with R B in 1969 (above right). Christie's sold some of her Hope jewels (below left, a few) since they had caused bitter family disputes. R B had stored the Hope jewels and pictures at Strand-on-the-Green House (below right) where Ruth Armitage played with Caspar.



In 1777 Captain Stephen Balcombe of the Whipping Post House, Rottingdean, and Mary Van Dyck of the painter's family, married in Rottingdean church. When the captain and his crew drowned, George IV became guardian of the three Balcombe sons, claimed by some writers as the King's bastards. One, William, went to St Helena where Napoleon lived with him and family until William Balcombe was sent to Australia as the first treasurer in the new colony of New South Wales. The Irishman, Brendan Bracken met the Australian Balcombes and when teaching at Rottingdean School in 1921 met the artist William Balcombe and his wife Emily there (above). For years Peter Churchill had holidays in Rottingdean with his family's lawyer, Sir Edward Carson, later the Ulster leader. Lady Carson was buried at Rottingdean in 1913 (below left). Rottingdean School disappeared in 1962, but not the Balcombe house where in 1972 Bracken's friend Peter Churchill aged 82 posed in the garden with Dame Flora Robson, the actress, and R B (below right). On succeeding his father in 1934 as 2nd Viscount Churchill, Peter could not stand as an MP but founded the Political Research Bureau for Labour instead. He remained friendly with his cousin Winston Churchill but not with Bracken who disliked reminders of Rottingdean friendships.

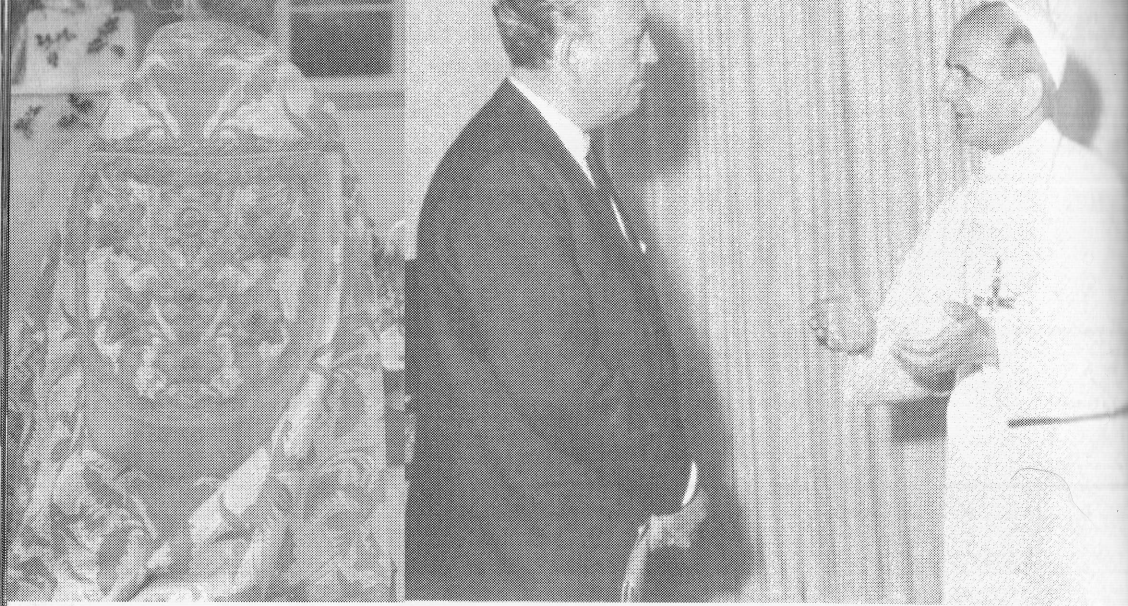




Two composer/conductors R B worked with in the 1940s Lawrence Leonard (above right) and Vilem Tausky (above left with R B) both became involved with R B's music circle in the 1980s and 1990s. Anner Bylsma, cello; Peter Skuce, harpsichord at the Holywell Music Room, Oxford (below left). Joan Durham next to her poet brother, Edward Lowbury, next to his violinist daughter, Pauline Lowbury; Stephen Williams double-bass player in front; Daniel Schorno on far right and R B behind, home from the Wigmore Hall where they heard the first performance of the Violin Sonata Robert Simpson wrote for Pauline (below right).

In 1898 Richard Bryans and William Fulton saw 7 friends sail from Belfast to found the Egypt General Mission with a hospital at Shebeen near Cairo and by 1945 Dr Mary Wills (above left seated) had long been a surgeon there. In the same year her friend Gerald Grosvenor married a Red Cross assistant, Sally Perry, in Cairo, and in 1963 he became 4th Duke of Westminster. Joe Ackerley wrote for Anthony Blunt's magazine at Cambridge and was rewarded for not mentioning in his sex exposes that Duchess Sally was his illegitimate half-sister via a barmaid. Also in wartime Cairo Sally's Red Cross friend Betty Sims married Grosvenor's cousin and future ducal trustee, Michael Crichton (above right), both cousins having been born in 1907 like their friend Anthony Blunt. From Belfast in 1944 William Fulton saw Richard Bryans's grandson, R B, off as a student at the Barry School of Evangelism supported by the rich Mrs Mabel Wills who hoped R B would join her daughter Mary at Shebeen. Mabel Wills and Mary flanking a headless R B in 1946 (below left). Also in 1946 R B met Sally Payne, wife of a Wills executive and started a long affair. R B with his son Christopher via Sally (below right) in 1952.





Hugh Montgomery (above left) in an ancient royal cope embroidered with the Garter and other emblems of knighthood taken from St James's Palace to the Secret Mass Centre where Hugh was parish priest in the 1960s when his friend from 1934 became Pope Paul VI (above right) seen here with Tom Driberg, the gossip columnist who wanted to be British Minister to the Vatican. In the 1930s Driberg got much involved at work and play with Peter Churchill (below left) whose father, the Lord Chamberlain, put up posters offering a reward when his wife, Lady Verena Churchill, ran off with her lesbian lover/spiritual director whom Verena's son, Peter, was obliged to marry to stifle gossip. Peter and King Edward VIII were cousins and godsons of Queen Victoria, and even greater scandal followed when the King gave up his throne for Mrs Wallis Simpson and they visited Hitler (below right).

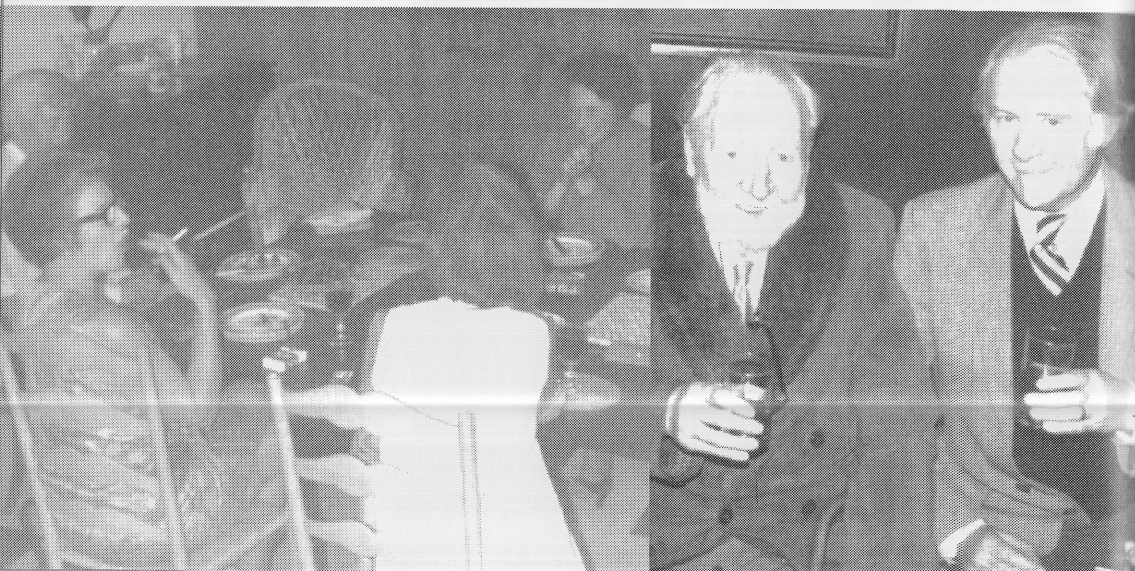


Lonsdale Bryans (above right) aged 17 in 1910, from Broadbent's House group at Eton where he learnt German to speak in the holidays with his Munster relations. The President of Germany's nephew, Baron Herbert von Hindenburg was married to Princess Munster's niece. In this way Lonsdale was a natural choice for the British Government to sponsor Lonsdale's 1940s secret missions to overthrow Hitler and prevent the 1942 Wannsee Conference decision to exterminate the Jews. Lonsdale supported the Anglo-Ukrainian Council founded by Maundy Gregory who sold honours and paid blackmail to his homosexual lovers. In Berlin, Lonsdale stayed at the Wannsee home of Prince Paul Skoropadsky (above left). Baroness Moura Budberg (below left, with lovers Gorky and H G Wells in 1920) who secretly passed to her friend Stalin information gleaned from Lonsdale Bryans. Baroness Karen Blixen (below right) the Danish author, much enjoyed Moura Budberg's company.





In the early 1960s the BBC Drama Department's Eric Ewens shared R B's London flat and worked with Samuel Beckett who specially wrote for the dynamic actor Pat Magee (above right with wife Belle). This Irish group included Eric's brother-in-law Denys Hawthorne, the actor, (below right with bearded Eric) and the BBC producers Louis MacNeice and (below left) Eileen Cullen talking to another BBC producer, Ursula Eason in glasses, while sitting opposite is the widow of Brigadier Richard Miers who wrote **Shoot To Kill** for Fabers and then shot himself. Beckett's and R B's publisher, another Irishman, Charles Monteith, and other staff from nearby Fabers, often joined the BBC set at R B's Bloomsbury flat. Above left, Charles Monteith and R B flanking Epstein's bust of another Faber director, T S Eliot, during a 1964 press interview. Later, a row rumbled for years in the High Court when, as Fellow and Sub-Warden of All Souls College, Oxford, Monteith disapproved of R B's attack on Warden John Sparrow who refused to implement the Franks Commission's proposal to open-up All Souls for graduate studies.



Llanover village children (above left, with R B back row right) in 1944 waiting to see Rudolf Hess going by to his Abergavenny secure hospital where Mrs Margaret Turner (above right with R B) had admittance as a medical missionary, seen pouring tea outside the Mayflower Gospel Caravan parked in Baille Glas churchyard. Hess's guards came for stronger stuff than tea until a murder by poisoning. Boys at Adelaide College, Ilfracombe (below left) with their 18 year-old housemaster R B in 1946. R B in 1944 (below right) with fellow-student Paul Tucker who later went to Belfast where another Barry wartime student, Ian Paisley, had started his own churches.

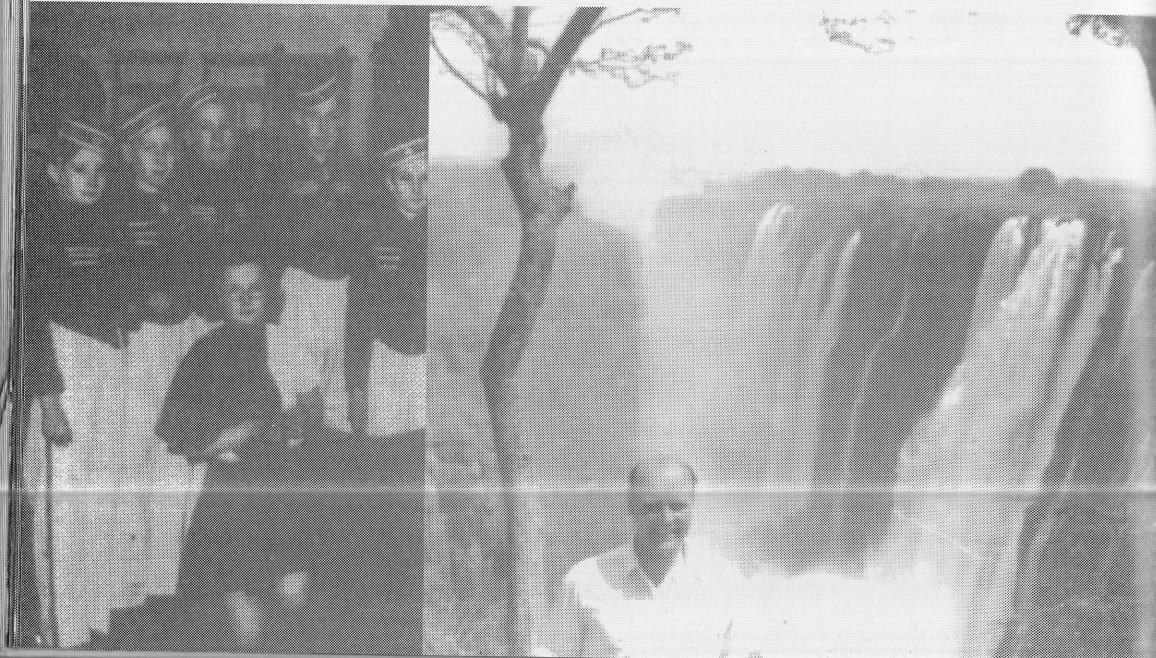




After RB's violinist father died in 1933 either his mother (top left) filled the house with singing or his sister Margaret (top right) with piano practice. The 7 year old RB played in a pageant (extreme left, below left). From 1936 to 1979 Patrick McClellan returned to Belfast with various opera companies, some of whose musicians lodged with RB's family. Below right, Patrick in 1953 touring the Coronation production of Britten's **Gloriana** in Africa.



Mabel Wills and her Cory in-laws started many evangelical institutes in Wales such as the Christian Alliance of Women and Girls in 1896. The patrons met in the ancient Llantarnam Abbey where Sir Clifford Cory MP presided over Hunt Balls, royal polo matches, Holy Communion in the private chapel with non-alcoholic wine and prayers for the Egypt General Mission. Above left, a gate-lodge of the vast abbey and right, Winnie Cory, the novelist who wrote many anti-Mormon books. Clifford's wife Anne was President of the RSPCA and joined Anthony Blunt's maternal grandmother in attacking dray-drivers over-straining horses up brays. Blunt's maternal grand-parents (below left) celebrated their Golden Wedding in 1915 with ginger beer toasts. Princess Despina Karadja (below right) the CAWG President and art historian who left her unique library to London University at Anthony Blunt's request.

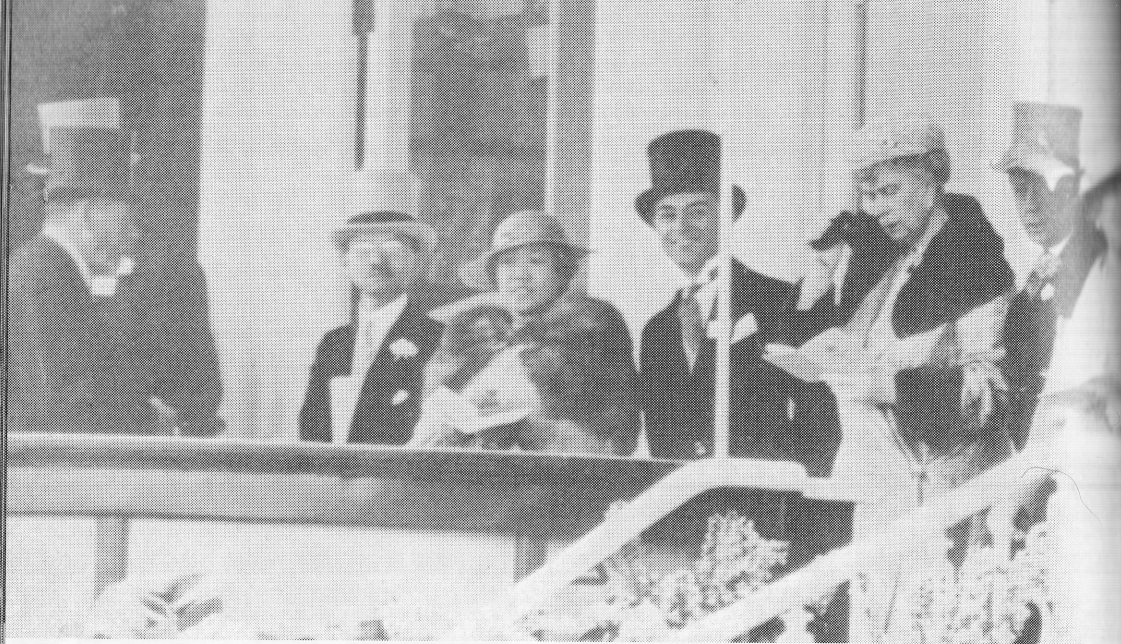




In 1918 the Germans had Prince Paul Skoropadsky proclaimed Hetman of the Ukraine (above). Hitler provided a special plane to take the Hetman's son, Prince Danylo Skoropadsky, from exile in Berlin to visit Ukrainian groups all over the world (below left) who were ready to march against Stalin. On 23 February 1957 Prince Danylo was murdered in London on the eve of his marriage to Halina Melnyk-Kaluzynska (below right) with R B in 1988.

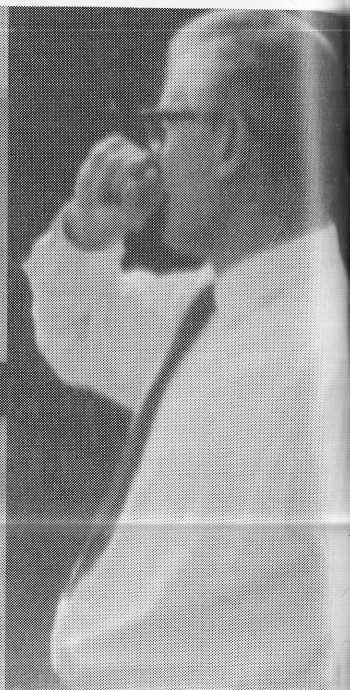
The author's paternal grandparents, Richard and Eliza Bryans, c1904, (above left). Their daughter Mrs Margaret Dickson (above right). While President Hoover and the Cabinet went into conclave, and while diplomats in Algiers searched for a baby dyed brown, all attention suddenly switched to the Dickson home in Montreal after her younger son, Robert, appeared at a window and was mistaken for the kidnapped Charles August Lindberg. Crowds became mobs and police flew in from New York and only went away when the real child's body was found in a ditch. R B with his cousin Robert Dickson (above right). R B's parents (below left) Robert and Georgina Bryans in 1925. Their children (below right) Eileen, Margaret and Robin in 1934 with their cousin David Divine.





Anthony Blunt and Guy Burgess agreed with E M Forster that it was better to betray one's country than one's friends and became Russian spies. Yet the faithful ones included Blunt's family friend Queen Mary. From 1927 Blunt and Peter Montgomery became close to Prince Chula of Siam (above) in the Royal Box at Ascot, left to right King George V, the King and Queen of Siam, Chula, Queen Mary, the Prince of Wales and Princess Helena Victoria. Below right, a pensive Peter Montgomery after attending Chula's Buddhist Memorial Service with R B in 1965. A corner of the Blessingbourne drawing-room (below left) where Blunt and his friends met for 40 years and where in 1979 Peter Montgomery told the press he feared disclosure of the Russian spying and that he would 'get the chop'.

Princess Carlos de Rohan, known as Dil, (top right in glasses) was Brendan Bracken's head of Swiss Affairs at the Ministry of Information and is seen here with the actress Faye Emerson, daughter-in-law of President Roosevelt. From 1925 to 1959 Dil lived with the Russian dancer Catherine Devilliers while Prince Carlos returned to Count Heinrich Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee, the German diplomat (top left). Until his murder, with many others, in 1934, Ernst Röhm (below left with Hess) shared his home with the English painter, Sir Francis Rose (below right).



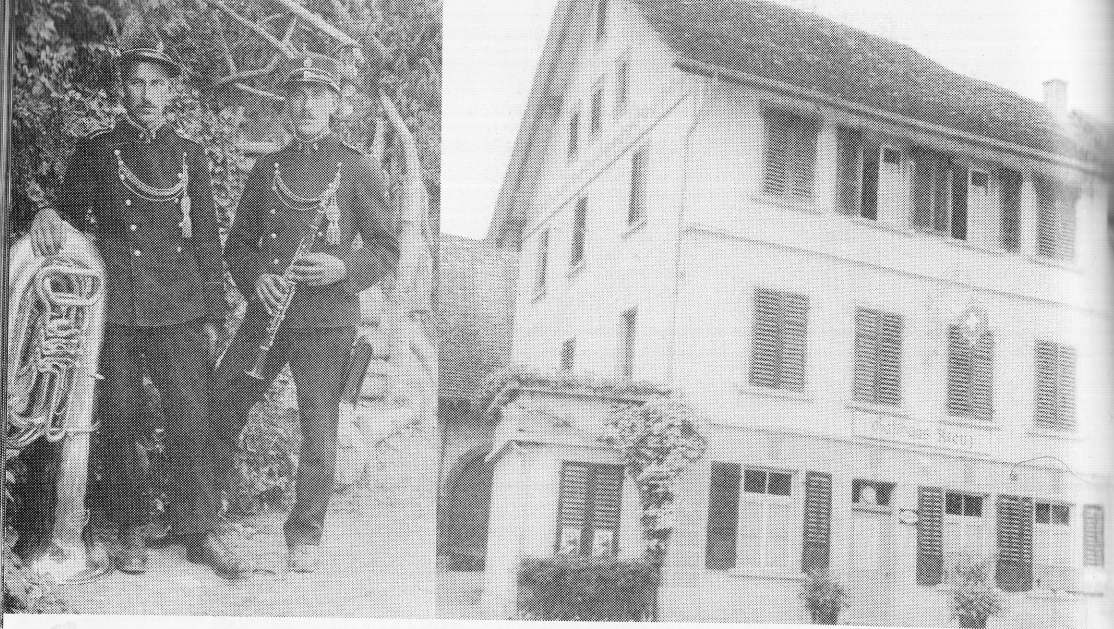


In 1929 Anthony Blunt wrote of William Beckford's Fonthill Abbey (above) as 'artistically the best production of the Gothic revival'. After it fell down many of its treasures went to Beckford's descendants, the Dukes of Newcastle at Clumber and to their town house in Portman Square where Blunt lived as Director of the Courtauld Institute from 1947 to 1974. Two of the 6th Duke's grandchildren best known to Blunt were the Cambridge-educated Prince Doria (below right) and the Russian translator Countess de la Feld (below left with R B in 1949) both Mussolini's enemies. After the Duce's death the Allies made Filippo Doria the Mayor of Rome and Adeline de la Feld later made R B her literary executor, much to Blunt's annoyance.

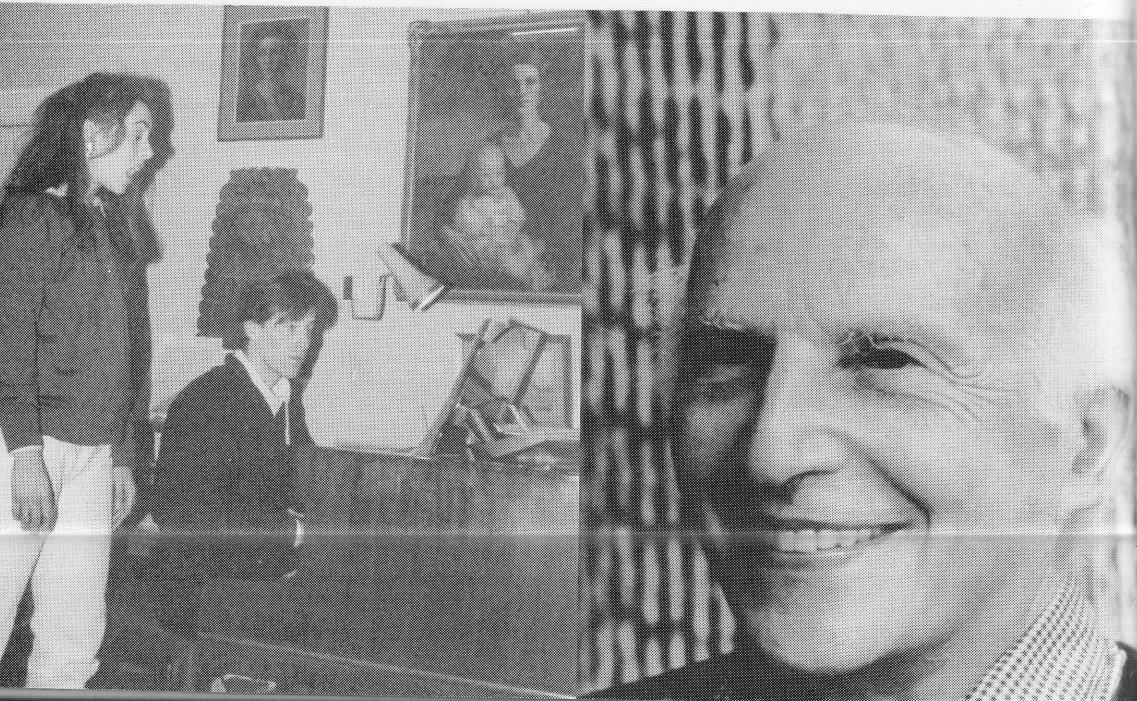


Two favourites at Lady Cunard's Ballroom were Prince George, Duke of Kent (below left) and Lady Bridget Parsons, niece of Adeline de la Feld and her co-trustee of an East End charity which interested Queen Mary who was not pleased when Lady Bridget dropped her plans to marry Prince George and appeared in Cecil Beaton's spoof memoirs, *My Royal Past* (above), left to right standing, Sir Michael Duff, who appeared in society dressed as Queen Mary, Lady Bridget Parsons, John Sutro, Sir Osbert Lancaster, Mr & Mrs Barbosa; seated, Lady Harris, Lord Berners, Sir Frederick Ashton. Even at the height of his career as a Russian spy, Anthony Blunt loved retrieving indiscreet royal letters for Queen Mary seen (below right) in the garden of Blunt's Aunt Mabel.





In the 1930s Karl and Walter Schorno played tuba and clarinet (above left) and in the Second World War, Walter's remarkable likeness to Hitler alarmed secret agents, especially Lonsdale Bryans, who used to eat at the Zum Kreuz Inn at Gächlingen (above right) owned for many years by Karl Schorno where his grandson, Daniel Schorno, grew up in this musical family and so became a composer. Daniel rehearsing a song cycle in 1992 with Melinda Hughes, soprano, (below left) whose mother, Cherry Hughes, was commissioned by BBC Television in 1982 to research 'the life and times' of Anthony Blunt. Jack Sarch, barrister, playwright and founder of the Pro Arte Society (below right) who was much concerned with the lives and times of his fellow Jews who perished in the Holocaust.



because the incident was reported to them the police decided on action more effective than a fine or a binding-over. In the way that Anglican bishops were pushed across the chessboard by the lapsed Irish Catholic, Brendan Bracken, so lawyers and policemen were likewise mere pawns in the politics of war.

During the First World War the Cardiff boy, Ivor Novello, had written the sentimental song 'Keep the Home Fires Burning' which became an instant success on every battlefield in France and at every music-hall in Britain. On the day when Churchill became Prime Minister in 1940 his old friend Ivor Novello sent him a gushing telegram of congratulations and the same day the Prime Minister answered, 'Thank you, dear Ivor. Now write another "Keep the Home Fires Burning".' Ivor had known Brendan Bracken from the outset of Brendan's introduction to Tredegar Park by Peter Churchill, but such high-flown connections did not stop a policeman calling at Ivor's home on 24 March 1944 with a summons because the composer had used more petrol than rationing allowed. Despite all the efforts of Churchill's old secretary and confidant, Sir Edward Marsh, the matinee idol of the British theatre went to Wormwood Scrubs Prison for a month.

The three main buildings around Western Square were the Barry School of Evangelism, the Conservative Club and the police station. It vexed Principal Fidler that after a few beers the navvies sang favourite hymns in the Conservative Club opposite the school but would not go to the nearby Luchana Navvy Mission to sing them. On the other hand, it equally vexed him when the police station sent one of its officers across the square to the Barry School if there was trouble with foreign students and currency regulations, or when further complaints had come in about Dennis Parry's seditious pulpit talk. As Mrs Fidler bore responsibility for the student colporteurs taking Bibles aboard the ships in Barry and Cardiff docks, the police quizzed her as to whether I was an 'Irish smuggler' as Evan had claimed during our fight at the Ritz.

No one could deny that the sailors had given me foodstuff and other goods during the previous six months, but it was no less a fact that most of the Lucky Strikes had been smoked by staff at Brendan Bracken's Ministry who had also consumed quantities of spam and butter. The police questioned me for hours about my involvement with Francis Rose and his association with Dil de Rohan and Hess and whether any sexual contact had occurred between Lord Tredegar and me. What Farmer Durham had seen of Evan in his witch's robes in Baille Glas Church had certainly done the rounds, the account becoming more bizarre than even the event itself as each person passed it on. Pending further enquiries my two passes to Barry and Cardiff docks were withdrawn.

But Principal Fidler felt reassured not only because the good Lord

above reigned omnipotently but also because the good Christian Lord Leathers held similar sway as Minister of War Transport and who knew Dil de Rohan's American friend whose ships carried Winston Churchill's supplies of brandy and cigars and much more on the bosom of the submarine-infested Atlantic. Like Hess in his Abergavenny prison, Churchill feared he might be poisoned, and it was Blunt's Cambridge friend and MI5 colleague, Victor Rothschild, who had to analyse these presents of food and drink at the Medical Research Council whose cat sampled the food.

Anthony Blunt also worked closely with a lawyer, Blanshard Stamp, at MI5 in building up a picture of the dangerous German spy called ARABEL who became MI5's counter-spy GARBO and who, in 1944 when the Barry police were interviewing me, was in hiding in South Wales and receiving large sums from both the German and British governments. By 1972 Blanshard Stamp had become a Lord Justice of Appeal who was not over-pleased when I pointed out that one of his colleagues, today's Lord Justice Neill, had brought the story of my young life in South Wales before the courts and that I wanted Anthony Blunt to confirm certain facts of our wartime association. But Blunt, of course, was not allowed near the High Court, which refused to make public how Blunt, Stamp and I were involved with Operation Garbo and a number of other missions.

Both my passes to the docks were eventually renewed but not my enthusiasm for ship visiting since music now occupied most of my free time in Barry. Mrs Wills had paid my school fees very much in hopes that the Lord would answer prayer and call me to work alongside her daughter Dr Mary in the Egypt General Mission where, like all good missionaries, I must be able to play a keyboard instrument in Gospel services. So I had a weekly lesson with a large lady called Miss Williams and daily practice on Mrs Wills's piano at Lanson House. Determined not to be left out of my affairs, Miss Katie Stewart insisted on paying for my music classes, for Evan and I had made up our quarrel, and he was already reading the lines of my right hand again and confirming his view of my strong head line and not being afraid of speaking my mind. My own row with him had made me feel even more strongly the absurdity of titles. I could not respect rich people such as Evan simply because he happened to be born with an oversized gold spoon in his mouth and had 'a handle to his name' as people put it.

I was encouraged in my views by Mabel Wills. Pride was the cardinal sin and Mrs Wills warned me to watch out for it. The pride of the eyes was a sin to be watched for daily. A long mirror hung in the hall at Lanson House. Should Mrs Wills see my covert glances at myself she would give me a gentle rebuke, 'You mustn't be like the Lady Beatrice.' Although I knew that the Lady Beatrice had been the wife of the godly Canon Stewart, and mother of

Katie who I visited regularly, she had always gazed at herself in the hall's long mirror. The Lady Beatrice had died in 1934 but her memory was evergreen. Her sister, Lady Tredegar, however, remained very much alive and suffered from a pride far worse than Lady Beatrice's ocular version. Evan's mother, like his sister, had become 'really queer' and only took pride in her birds' nests. Seldom a visit to music practice at Lanson House went by without some reference to the Lady Beatrice and her 'queer' sister on the nest, 'the Oscar Wilde trouble' and the wicked Lord Alfred Douglas that Evan Tredegar supported.

Mabel Wills had, of course, been a pride-watcher all her saved life, and as a bride she had refused her father-in-law's offer of Lord Romilly's large house and decided on modest Lanson House instead. She had firmly rejected the idea of her husband buying one of Lloyd George's titles, however firmly she remained a Liberal and devoted to 'dear David' as the former Prime Minister was called. Even so, every day, perhaps twice a day, old Mabel had to do her spiritual exercises against pride. Just as she addressed 'Master Satan' and commanded the Devil to come out from her children when Vernon lost his temper or when big fat Sylvia refused to get out of the bath, so Mrs Wills would stand on the balcony of her bedroom repeating over and over, 'Give me a prick, Lord, give me a prick!' She would call skyward, meaning that God should pin-prick her pride, perhaps because she had shown me an old letter from Queen Mary's mother or had laughed at some neighbour who had 'not paid up' for their knighthood.

In summer she stood on the balcony in terror if Vernon had gone swimming. Local lads considered it a feat of daring to swim across the mouth of Whitemore Bay because, of course, the 40 ft tidal drop caused dangerous currents. Evan Tredegar was a strong swimmer and had taught Vernon his first strokes at Cold Knapp as a boy, so now nothing could stop the middle-aged, rather plump Vernon from threshing across the treacherous water to his poor mother's horror.

I shared a bedroom at the Barry School with a boy from Sussex who was a year older than me, Stanley Funnell. He aimed at going as a missionary to South America so he learnt the necessary Spanish from that master of languages, Principal Fidler. Stanley and I often went on our bicycles to swim at Cold Knapp, but I was not there on the Saturday when he went with our other friend, Peter Amies, and was swept away by the current. Stanley Funnell was perhaps the most balanced, generous and promising of all the students and his death plunged us all into grief and nowhere more so than at Lanson House.

The drowning appeared in the South Wales newspapers and Katie Stewart sent copies to her cousin Evan who had met Stanley with me several

times on the beach or as he played his violin to my organ accompaniment in Porthkerry Church.

Mrs Wills tried to use the event to stop Vernon swimming from the breakwater, but he had the same fascination with dangerous water as did his former swimming teacher, Evan, whose idol, Shelley, had drowned in Italy in 1822. Mrs Wills had been grateful to Dennis Parry for helping to get Vernon out of the house during the day so avoiding fights with his sister Sylvia and the embarrassment of apple-pie beds for the elderly and shy Miss Marion Howe, the lady housekeeper. Earning money was not the reason for Vernon's job with Betterwear Brushes, but it did have a bonus in the form of many opportunities of witnessing for the Lord.

But Vernon's personal appearance hardly helped, so that the tall bowler hat, the mittens and the bulging eyes and pockets frequently met with the slamming of front doors before he even had a chance to ask if people were saved or needed new stair brushes. Vernon had put his foot in too many doors, but the police turned a blind eye for he was a well-known local character and preacher. But when enthusiasm for the Lord led Vernon to smash a glass-panelled door and the woman behind it was taken to hospital with severe cuts, the law had no choice but to take its course. Although Mrs Wills had so many important and titled relations around, I was asked as the sole person, apart from the lawyers, to accompany Vernon to the court presided over for fifty years by so many of his own family. Although let off with a fine and costs, the scandal got into the newspapers, and caused Mabel Wills to rush to her balcony to ask the Lord for a quick prick.

When Mrs Wills's sister-in-law died I had to go to the grand residence and list some pieces of furniture carved many years ago out of old ships' timbers and which bore the family coat-of-arms. Although Mrs Wills was such a pride-watcher, she was always wanting money for missionary work and she knew that her evangelical praying-partner, Dame Violet Wills, and her sisters, would help secure good prices for large furniture that seemed made for the Bristol mansions. Although the Wills family prided itself on its long-established shipping interests, it was tobacco that got them into the **Guinness Book of Records** as Britain's family with the most millionaires. Principal Fidler did not like going to Lanson House, for however wonderful a praying-partner Mrs Wills was, her son Vernon, like the other Vernon Willises in Bristol, smoked. What is certain is that Mrs Wills never attempted to douse his pipe by pouring beer over him, a fate that befell Sir Walter Raleigh in the new castle he built at Sherborne in 1594, for his servant thought he was on fire.

In 1944 the huge pile of Sherborne Castle was presided over by Colonel 'Freddy' Wingfield-Digby who had much in common with his Wills

friends concerning religion. That year James Lees-Milne, a convert to Catholicism, went to Sherborne forewarned by Anne Rosse that the Wingfield-Digbys might not like him, and he wrote, 'There was one awkward moment when, à propos of nothing, the Colonel exclaimed, "I can't stick Roman Catholics. One can smell 'em a mile off."'

The colonel's problem was that he had two brilliant cousins, the brothers Robert and Richard Wingfield-Digby. After Cambridge, Richard went on to become Dean of Peterborough, while at Oxford Robert met Evan Tredegar and subsequently became a Catholic and then a Jesuit priest. Besides putting tracts on the canons' stalls at Brecon Cathedral Dennis Parry accosted Anglican clergy and Catholic priests in the street to force Protestant, as distinct from Gospel tracts, on them. One of these was the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cardiff, a pipe-smoking Irishman as much disliked by Evan Tredegar, one of his flock, as by Principal Fidler, one of his avowed enemies. After reading my account of Archbishop McGrath published in 1963 Hugh Montgomery, then a parish priest, wrote to me, 'I am glad to know from your account what Archbishop McGrath was really like, he used to be criticised because he seemed to have been over-scrupulous about certain things like giving dispensation for mixed marriages, but from what you say I see that he was essentially a good, kind and understanding man and I feel so grateful to him for the kindness he showed you then.'

The Archbishop of Cardiff saw less of Dennis Parry and his Protestant cohorts than he was forced to see of Evan Tredegar at important Catholic celebrations in Wales, London, or at St Peter's in Rome, where Evan wore one of his many beautiful robes to do with the many papal orders he belonged to. Evan and Father Martindale had conducted their long controversy in the press about Consuela, Duchess of Marlborough's marriage being annulled by the Pope because she had been married for the size of her dowry. Yet despite this, Evan got his second marriage to Princess Olga Dolgorouky annulled in 1943 by his friend, Pope Pius XII.

In 1963 Hugh Montgomery wrote in *Cosmos* magazine, 'I had first met the Pope when, as Monsignor Eugenio Pacelli, he was still Nuncio in Berlin. Though Pius XII came of a well-established Roman family he was not of the old nobility, as was often supposed - perhaps this was because high-sounding titles were conferred on close relations of his by the King of Italy in the last days of the monarchy.' Unpublished is Hugh's Vatican diary of 1943 when Pius XII was having to annul Evan's unconsummated marriage to Princess Olga, and Hugh, as First Secretary at the British legation, was introducing to the Pope the first British airmen the pontiff had seen in the war, and whom Hugh was hiding in the Vatican. Hugh wrote, 'The majesty of the supreme Pontiff by whom they were received in audience today was by no means lost

on the three "prisoners." The Holy Father before turning his attention to them, asked me for some particulars about them. He then spoke to each in turn in very good English, holding each by the hand for some time and talking to them just as a very kind and experienced confessor might to someone who needed his special attention.'

When Dylan Thomas noted that he had been invited to 'Sherry and princesses' with Evan, he meant exactly that. Evan could not be dissociated from royalty since he took it so seriously as did his friend Pius XII who felt particularly anxious for the Russian princes to come under his aegis, and as he had obliged Evan by getting rid of Princess Olga, the Holy Father thought the least Evan and his great fortune could do in return was to influence the remnants of Russian royalty. His Holiness, moreover, had a special concern for the Orthodox soul of Prince Danylo Skoropadsky who had been living with his family in Berlin when the Pope was there as Nuncio and Hugh Montgomery as a member of the British Embassy staff.

Evan's penchant for sherry and princesses amused the Archbishop of Cardiff as much as it did me and we both treated it as a sort of charade though neither of us objected to the sherry. In contrast, the scholarly Dr McGrath regarded the writing of Evan's friend, Father Martindale, most seriously. Evan and Father Martindale, themselves both converts to Catholicism, hoped and prayed that the young Oxford scholar, Father Robert Wingfield-Digby, would become a fashionable saviour of souls. Their hopes and prayers fulfilled, they watched Robert rise to fame at Farm Street Church in Mayfair which he filled with the fashionable at his famous Tuesday discussions for those seeking the faith. But prior to this the young Jesuit was at the Sacred Heart Church in Bournemouth, much too close for the comfort of his cousin Colonel Wingfield-Digby at Sherborne Castle, still boasting that he could smell Catholics 'a mile off.'

I had been going to Katie Stewart's house for months and studying matters which Evan thought I ought to know about. So I read Prince Alexandre Wolkonsky on the Ukraine and the beloved Father Martindale on the Catholic Church, both publications from the press of Maundy Gregory, founder of the Anglo-Ukraine Council.

Presiding over another ancestral pile was the Rt Hon John Hills PC, MP, Financial Secretary to the Treasury and husband of an oil-heiress and novelist, Mary Hills, whose son, Andrew attended the Oratory School in London. This solid, Tory stock was also Catholic and when the Financial Secretary died suddenly in 1939, his beautiful young widow fell in love with Danylo Skoropadsky. Because Danylo's parents and sisters still lived in grace-and-favour in Hitler's Germany, Anthony Blunt and his Soviet masters were always anxious to know what Danylo was doing in Lady Hills's

Kensington house by night and what aircraft he was designing at Thomas P Headland Ltd by day.

When I called at Archbishop McGrath's modest house in Cardiff one afternoon he said since Father Martindale's writing on the Church appeared to impress me so much, he, the archbishop, had arranged for me to go to St Joseph's Home in Bournemouth where Father Martindale had himself gone as a teenager for spiritual help. Lord Tredegar had given a suitable sum of money for my month's stay and I would be the first person to be instructed by Father Wingfield-Digby. However, there could be no question of my being received into the Church before my eighteenth birthday in a year's time, an attitude in stark contrast to what happened when, to please Betty Maxwell, I gave in at fourteen to Pastor Rea's emotional pleading. Evan Tredegar, his sister and the Wills children had also all made 'the decision for Christ' around the age of fourteen, and although Dr Mary Wills abided by it until her death, Evan, when not distracted by emotional crises over sailors or the spirits of the dead, afterwards firmly defended the throne of the fisherman in Rome.

The thought of going to Bournemouth rather than anywhere else made the arrangement doubly attractive because my most enduring friendship on the Mayflower Gospel Caravan had been with Edwin Coulson. If Evan disliked Petter's *Cuckoo in the Nest*, he was intrigued by Edwin Coulson's *Saved in the Crow's Nest*. This told of the dramatic conversion in the Red Sea of the sailor Edwin had been for six years before ill-health kept him ashore at his parents' home in Bournemouth where he worked with American servicemen before going as a student to the Barry School of Evangelism. Anybody could see the sea in Edwin's blue eyes and fresh sailor's face. The clothes he wore too had almost a salty tang about them. Edwin's demand for more hot water to wash the greasy dinner plates and for proper baths met with such hostility from Principal Fidler, that Edwin packed his bags and returned to the American base in Bournemouth.

Dil de Rohan had been upset about the police interview with me and their questions about my visits to her flat at Selwyn House. She now thought I could pick up more unrationed stores from the American camps in Bournemouth than from the Liberty ships at Barry. The movement of troops and ships all seemed to interest her Swiss Department. My decision to spend a month with Father Wingfield-Digby of the Society of Jesus in Bournemouth hit the Barry School like a bomb and they rightly suspected Lord Tredegar's hand in it. But I did not leave without giving proper notice and so had to live for days in an atmosphere of tension while much praying went on.

The Fidlers talked non-stop all the way to the station trying to persuade me of the evils that awaited me, especially sexual evils like those practised by Lord Tredegar and Lord Alfred Douglas. They tried to make me feel guilty

as though I personally was extinguishing the flame of the 1904 Welsh Revival at which both the Fidlers had warmed their hearts. When I would not be persuaded, the Fidlers resorted to violence. I carried a travelling rug and typewriter Mrs Turner had given me on leaving Baille Glas Church. Mrs Fidler grabbed the typewriter and her husband began a tug-of-war with the rug. In raised voices they told me these things had been given to me as a student training to be a Protestant missionary and, moreover, given to me by another burning brand of the 1904 Revival, Mrs Margaret Turner. They were not meant to enrich already wealthy Jesuits. The train made its first jolt of starting so I let the rug go and Principal Fidler fell over. A week later I had a letter from Mrs Turner saying how deeply upset she was that the Fidlers had interfered in our relationship, and that the rug and typewriter awaited our next meeting.

At Bournemouth a smiling Sister Frances took my bag and led me inside, and she, like many of the other nuns, was Irish and came from County Tyrone. She pointed out a little crucifix hanging from the patron saint's finger, presented by Father Martindale who had stayed at the home while being instructed by the Jesuits.

I loved Bournemouth with its sandy beaches and fir trees and the famous Pavilion, an early multi-purpose complex of concert hall, tea-rooms, theatre and gardens. Robert Wingfield-Digby and I spent our mornings talking about such matters as the divinity of God but in the late afternoons we liked to watch the goddesses at the Pavilion's tea dances, or better still to have them in our arms as we waltzed and fox-trotted. I could see immediately how female company excited the Jesuit. Years later, when he had become an Oxford don and then a famous Mayfair priest, homosexuality was extremely fashionable, and few were more fashionable than Father Wingfield-Digby. He associated with some of the best known gay figures of the time, but I knew his preference was for girls and his release from the Society of Jesus and marriage to a girlfriend did not surprise me. We remained friends.

The Bournemouth Pavilion was the first building I became conscious of as a recent work of architecture. The winning firm of the 1923 municipal architectural competition was G Wyville Holms and Shirley Knight, the latter being married to Mrs Wills's cousin Kathleen, and also the father of three sons who have figured in my life's interest in the theatre, music and architecture. My actress friend from Belfast, Jean Hamilton, married Humphrey Knight, while his brother Desmond married Alice Lamb whose Irish father was a favourite drinking partner with my theatre friends, and Christopher Knight and his architectural colleague George Balcombe formed close connections with my music studio as well as my dealings with Anthony Blunt. Although Mrs Wills and her three children all died without progeny, their cousins still

figure today in various activities of mine which include politics.

My month in Bournemouth passed too quickly and I had to face the shame-faced Fidlers. But six months later when I returned to Bournemouth for a longer stay I did so without dramatics at the railway station. The General Election following victory over the Germans, swept Churchill out of office and Brendan Bracken out of his Paddington seat.

Long before this, Evan Tredegar had introduced Brendan Bracken to a publishing friend, Major John Crosthwaite-Eyre of Eyre and Spottiswoode, the Prayer Book printers, as 'a brilliant young Australian.' This would quickly lead to Brendan becoming the owner of such newspapers as the **Financial Times** and **The Economist**. He was greatly helped in his newspaper career by J L Garvin, editor of the **Observer**, who battled so long against Evan and Father Martindale over the Pope declaring the marriage of the Duke of Marlborough and Consuelo Vanderbilt as null and void. Naturally Bracken sided with the Churchills and the **Observer** editor in their view that the Marlborough children were not bastards and therefore ought to inherit Blenheim Palace.

Physical healing as well as spiritual healing drew Mrs Wills and her South Wales relations to Paddington where, in addition to the evangelical St John's, over which Anthony Blunt's father then presided in the 1920's, there was St Mary's Hospital. It was already famous and one of the special surgeons, Stamford Felce, was uncle to Mrs Wills and her brother Willie Pethybridge, Lord Mayor of Cardiff, the City of Dreadful Knights. Willie's unmarried sister Alice acted as his Lady Mayoress. Now when Alice and her sister Mabel Wills arrived at Paddington Station they were met by Uncle Stamford's daughter Emmeline, Lady Handover. The history of Paddington, indeed the history of mayoralty, would not be the same without Emmeline, because of the number of times she served as Lady Mayoress. In the years when her husband, Col Sir George Handover, was not the mayor, Emmeline was asked to preside as Lady Mayoress since she looked as regal as her friend Queen Mary.

It was seen as grossly bad taste in 1926 when Evan got his friend the Pope to annul the Marlborough marriage in the way he did, and Lady Handover and her South Wales relations rejoiced when Brendan Bracken, the lapsed Irish Catholic, sided with Protestant Winston Churchill. Brendan took great care to conceal his Catholic upbringing and black magic nights at Tredegar Park. In 1929, Brendan decided to stand as a Conservative in North Paddington and did so with Emmeline Handover's blessing. Bracken won the seat and from it went on to become Churchill's right-hand man in and out of the House of Commons. But much more than religion was involved. Lord Mayor Pethybridge in Cardiff and Mayor Handover in Paddington were

leading Freemasons and behind the Masonic Temple throne they had to sort out Maundy Gregory and his homosexual blackmailers and bring an end to the Free Ukraine campaign.

The Protestant side, as represented by Willie Pethybridge and his homosexual friends at Lady Cory's musical evenings in 28 Belgrave Square, was often opposed by Evan's Catholic sherry-and-princesses receptions with Lord Alfred Douglas in attendance since Winston Churchill had successfully sued Bosie Douglas for criminal libel. But Labour's victory in 1945 united many old enemies to fight the 'wicked Commies' such as Nye Bevan. In the Resignation Honours which followed, Churchill made Sir Leonard Lyle a peer, so freeing Lyle's safe Tory seat in Bournemouth for Brendan Bracken to contest. This had some strange results.

Before the election results came out, the Reverend Mother stripped the tall telephone of its tea-cosy in her office at St Joseph's Home and I accepted a call from Lanson House. Miss Kathleen Hamilton, the Prayer Secretary of the Egypt General Mission, lived in the Christian Hotel in Boscombe, and was in the throes of writing a book about the seven young men from Belfast who founded the mission in Egypt. Mrs Wills asked me on the phone to go and help on this literary project. Little did I realise that this proposal was simply one of Principal Fidler's schemes, not only to extricate me from the clutches of the Jesuits but, at one and the same time, to strike a blow at his foe, Evan Tredegar, and also at Evan's old protege Brendan Bracken, now the new Tory candidate for Bournemouth. I had not been in Miss Hamilton's office an hour before realising that numbered among the Christian Hotel's residents was no less a notable than Percival Petter and his wife Ruth.

The imposing Petter surpassed Lloyd George in the same class of physical good looks and charm. It was impossible to believe that such a grand personage had dirtied his hands building the first internal combustion motor-car engine in England. Equally, it was not easy to reconcile the charming host at the dinner table with the violent scenes in St Paul's Cathedral. I enjoyed going out with the Petters in their car until it dawned on me that their amiability was a cynical cover-up for their determination to get information out of me in a way, and for a purpose, that not even Guy Burgess had done for his Russian masters. So the Petters persisted with a hint here, a suggestion there, and sometimes, a direct question. Just what did I know about Brendan Bracken's past in Ireland and Tredegar Park? Had he been born a Catholic and given it up? Was he not the evil genius behind appointing the High Church cuckoo William Wand into the well-feathered nest of Fulham Palace?

Robert Wingfield-Digby acknowledged that his cousin Freddy at Sherborne Castle was boasting to all and sundry that he could 'smell Catholics a mile off.' Freddy's son Simon, the castle's present owner, first became a Tory

MP for a Dorset division in 1941 and in 1990 proudly recalled to me his satisfaction at having got Brendan Bracken to speak in his constituency, and talked to me affectionately of his cousin 'Father Robert' since Simon did not share his father's extreme views on religion.

But in 1945 with the fierce battle of St Paul's Cathedral over Brendan Bracken's choice of bishop, Father Robert, to whom I was completely sympathetic, wanted me to learn more about Petter's campaign in Bournemouth. In *The Protege* I wrote, 'Percival Petter had recently earned himself another sort of fame by staging demonstrations at the enthronement of Dr Wand, in St Paul's Cathedral, as Bishop of London. Now, Percival devoted his attention to getting me out of St Joseph's Convent. None of the diehard Protestants could believe that I was staying at the convent voluntarily . . . On the whole, I made a bad bargain in exchanging St Joseph's Convent for the Christian Hotel at Boscombe, in giving up the comparative freedom of the one for the crabbed bigotry of the other.'

Robert Wingfield-Digby certainly enjoyed the situation when I joined Petter for morning talks but in the afternoon went to the Pavilion tea-dances to pass on to Robert the latest news on the by-election. Petter, of course, felt pretty certain of his allegations, confirmed years later by Francis Williams, the Labour journalist, who recalled his wartime boss, Bracken, 'I would often hear him shouting down the telephone with elaborate schemes for moving church dignitaries around in a game of political and ecclesiastical chess.' Such indeed was my own game in 1945.

The Protestant society that preceded Petter's had been started by Winston Churchill's aunt, Lady Wimborne whose money came from South Wales steel but she lived at Canford Manor, Wimborne, in Dorset, and although the house became a public school in 1923, the family was well represented in the neighbourhood by Risdon Bennett who was tutor to Lady Wimborne's four Rodney grandsons even before their parents divorced in 1902. Canford Manor affairs generally could hardly do without the scholarly author and early broadcaster Risdon Bennett in spite of his coolness towards his employer's raids on High Churches. He found more to interest him in his friend Robert Baden-Powell's scouting experiment on nearby Brownsea Island where the young Lord Rodney was the first scout.

Those aboriginal scouts doubtless left the island gladly for more strawberry teas with Risdon Bennett in his Yew Tree Cottage at Broadstone where I went myself in 1945 for private tuition in more than Latin and Greek, because the cottage became a campaign cell for the outsider, Brendan Bracken, against the local Labour candidate Wing-Commander Edward Shackleton, the former BBC producer in Belfast.

When the *Sunday Times* reviewed Roland Huntford's biography of

Shackleton's father in 1989, the paper called the explorer, 'A mercurial mixture of blarney and opportunism, Shackleton sought fame and riches. He was restless and enquiring, frustrated as a poet and so he turned explorer. Scott and Shackleton were both equally ambitious and unscrupulous, and thus soon fell out.' The disappointed poet returned to England and found solace with a more successful writer, Harold Avery, who would become his biographer in 1933. Avery was one of Mabel Wills's cousins and through this connection Dame Janet Stancomb-Wills financed Shackleton's final attempt to reach the South Pole during which he died. His son Edward was sent to Radley, afterwards becoming an explorer too for a time before taking up politics on Labour's behalf in Bournemouth.

Eddie Shackleton emerged from his experience at the BBC in Belfast during the Hungry Thirties with a social conscience and my relationship with him revolved around Ulster politics. But that other Irishman, who pretended for so long to be an Australian, Brendan Bracken, disliked his opponent who aptly took advantage of his father's fame with the slogan 'To the Poll with Shackleton.' In the General Election Sir Leonard Lyle had got his expected majority of 20,000, but after his elevation to the Lords that majority dropped to only 6,000 when the famous former Cabinet Minister, Brendan Bracken, took Lyle's place.

A remarkable Irishwoman, Mrs Henrietta Ormonde-Masterson, and her friend Lady Sherston-Baker were the leading lights of the Sacred Heart Church, and over many years its Jesuit fathers, past and present, had wined and dined at their hospitable boards. They were overjoyed when one of the Wingfield-Digbys became a priest and Father Robert and I were invited to their homes. Old Henrietta felt disappointed about Brendan's slender majority especially as at the start of the campaign the Tory Party had confidently expected a 25,000 majority because of Brendan's close connection with Churchill. Nevertheless, there he was, back in the House of Commons, and like so many Tories at the Sacred Heart Church, Mrs Ormonde-Masterson tried to analyse the dramatically small majority, figures which had surprised neither Robert Wingfield-Digby nor me.

I had told Brendan of Petter's presence in Bournemouth and his means of attack. Eventually, Brendan had no choice but to get his agent to issue a strongly worded denial that Brendan was in any way connected with the Roman Catholic Church. So, I discovered, this was politics. It shattered my respect for institutional religion and deeply upset Mrs Ormonde-Masterson and the Jesuit congregation.

A few months later Shackleton was himself on the government benches in the Commons looking across at Churchill and Bracken on the opposition benches, but he did not meet Bracken's friend Peter Churchill until

1972 at my home in Brighton. As Peter had created the Political Research Bureau for Labour in 1934 and Shackleton was Labour Leader in the Lords by 1972, I thought they should meet, particularly as at that time all three of us were working to unseat the Tories. Because Anthony Blunt's close friend Peter Montgomery, held Shackleton in such admiration as a result of their work together at the BBC in Belfast, I was extremely careful when writing against the Tories in the 1974 General Election to get Shackleton to have senior lawyers, such as Lord Stow Hill QC, the former Home Secretary, to check the accuracy of my sources.

Shackleton also spent a great deal of time on promoting my books, so accordingly I sent him a piece I had written about the connection we both had in our teenage days with the Wills family. He sent several replies to it including this of 7 January 1975, 'I now return to page 67 and repeat again that I think it makes very interesting reading. I look forward to seeing those further parts which you suggest I might find more to the point.' Unfortunately, spy-catching journalists and their publishers obtained a copy of taped telephone conversations between Shackleton and me about Shackleton's reason for refusing Harold Wilson's offer of office after the 1974 Labour victory in the General Election for which we had all worked so hard. Such exaggerated claims did the publishers make that they were promptly sued for libel by a third party with backing from Shackleton and me.

In 1945 I left Bournemouth to visit Evan in London and to see his long-standing friend and confessor Father C C Martindale. The man I met hardly answered the description given him by a biographer as 'the most brilliant English priest of the century'. The unassuming man I first met in Evan's house in South Audley Street had about him an air of tiredness. Perhaps it was weariness of life for he had seen a lot of suffering and endured much pain, however forgiving he was by nature. And no matter how influential he may have been in the lives of certain dukes his last years were more concerned with the fate of dockers and stokers who had fallen from Francis Rose's favour. How utterly he differed in looks, manner and social outlook from the imposing Percival Petter. Brendan Bracken's brazen public denial of his Catholic origins had distressed Father Martindale not only by itself but also because of the sadness it caused at St Joseph's Home which the Jesuit so loved to visit.

But as much as I liked Father Martindale I did not get on with Evan's two other companions, Henry Maxwell and Francis Rose. They failed to understand my position and although they could see I was not Evan's favourite type of sailor picked up in the East End who liked the crack of the whip for the tune of a fiver, they felt jealous. Evan did not help by excluding the others from the conversation with constant references to people and

events they knew nothing of, such as the Stewart and Wills families.

In 1971 Francis Rose told Cecil Beaton, who duly recorded it, that he, Rose, had appointed his latest boyfriend, Bob in Wales, as his heir. However, by that time Rose had got into the habit of throwing bricks through shop windows in order to get a bed in police cells, so there was not much for Bob to inherit. Evan, as much as Rose, liked to bait young men with promises of mention in his will, but Evan changed his will as frequently as he changed his lovers and because Rose knew I was a friend of Evan's family as well as Evan himself, more than the normal jealousy arose.

Over the years Evan had been generous with his time and money to Alfred Douglas and this relationship came between Evan and me. Evan's enthusiasm to introduce me to Bosie scarcely concealed Bosie's wish for me to leave the room as soon as good manners permitted because the ancient poet wanted to talk money with Evan and see what champagne was in the two hampers Evan had brought. And I had shown monumental bad taste in not accompanying Evan and his vast wreath to Bosie's funeral.

Henry Maxwell now circulated the rumour that Evan was my father and Katie Stewart my mother, a parallel case to that of Evan's other mysterious Irish friend, Brendan Bracken, still reputed then as being Winston Churchill's son. Evan was such a tease, contradictory and irritating one minute, breaking down other's confidence, so profound and gentle the next, hoping to win that confidence back. Inevitably this led to more than standing-up rows with people like Lady Cunard who knew how to answer back. In *The Twain Have Met* Prince Chula tells that the two boys he 'got to know well' at Harrow School were 'Simon Wingfield Digby, now an MP and a junior Minister in the Conservative Government...and Henry Maxwell.'

Henry knew Evan so well that he entertained great expectations and saw himself already as the future heir to the Honeywood House portion of Evan's vast estate, since Tredegar Park itself had to go to the despised cousin John Morgan, as the future Lord Tredegar. Henry was most attentive to old Lady Tredegar's needs at Honeywood House outside Dorking and saw that she had all the twigs and mud necessary to build her birds' nests. Henry therefore wanted no competition from someone such as me, who knew people like the Stewarts, Lady Tredegar's nieces and nephews, who might persuade Evan to leave Honeywood House to them who knew and loved their aunt well.

Henry was a writer and acknowledged as an authority on Ulster affairs which he knew through his close association with his former room-mate at Cambridge, Peter Montgomery. But Henry preferred going with Evan to Yeats's country to tell fortunes at house parties and taking the Mountbattens to sherry and princesses on Evan's yacht. Henry's manoeuvring left me cold, however. Doubtless he had a genuine affection for Evan, but he reckoned

without Evan's volatility. Evan could just as well turn against Henry as he had done against Yeats. By the time I first heard Henry Maxwell accusing the Stewart family of interfering in their aunt's affairs at Honeywood House, Evan no longer brought the best of champagne and his favourite young men to lie at the feet of the ageing Bosie Douglas who died in March 1945. Like myself, Henry also declined to go to Bosie's funeral, nor did he send flowers.

Evan had a mania about respect for the mortal remains of his friends but felt only rage towards Yeats and probably thought the poet deserved the ignominy of a pauper's grave in France because when editing an anthology of poetry Yeats included no verse by Evan's beloved Lord Alfred Douglas. Evan was abroad when his aunt, Lady Beatrice Stewart died in 1934 but *The Times* reported 'Captain H. Ware represented Viscount Tredegar' and Evan took it as a slur against himself that Henry Maxwell and I did not trouble to go to Bosie's funeral. This smouldering row got connected into my stay with the Jesuits in Bournemouth and with Brendan Bracken's alarming statement that he had no connection with the Roman Catholic Church. Evan fumed in high dudgeon against Henry and Brendan but turned on me as a scapegoat.

I stormed out of the house without a second thought. It was Evan who knew all about Father Martindale's stay at St Joseph's Home, and I could not possibly have been expected to judge how Brendan would react to Percival Petter's truthful allegations. Everybody knew truth to be the most lethal weapon of all, and nobody knew it better than the mendacious Bracken himself, whose Ministry of Information diligently manufactured lies out of truth for consumption by the Germans via Operation Garbo.

Evan now came running down South Audley Street after me in much the same distraught condition as Principal Fidler had earlier seen me off at Cadoxton station. I now took a train to Exeter. Mrs Margaret Turner had returned from the Mayflower Gospel Caravan in Wales to settle affairs about her home Moreton. Dr Barnado's Home had now vacated it to go back to their old headquarters, leaving Mrs Turner the problem of what to do with the large house. She would have liked me to have helped her set up another orphanage but in the end Moreton became a home for retired Methodist ministers.

While I was in Devon the storm everybody was expecting at the Barry School of Evangelism finally broke. The two warring factions flew at each other's throats and the whole place was closed down temporarily. When matters were finally sorted out the school reopened. But some of the best students and staff had left. Principal Fidler wrote to me and asked me to return, for, as usual, he was anxious to keep the number of students up. I was delighted to return with the travelling-rug and typewriter as proof that the Fidlers must stop interfering with my relationships outside the school.

Since students had to account to Bernard Fidler if they were out for

meals and which pulpits they would occupy, my daily absence at Lanson House became another tug-of-war like the travelling-rug. Mrs Fidler telephoned while I was at Lanson House one day and demanded to know what I was doing at that moment. I told her I was addressing some of the thousand invitations to the fiftieth anniversary of Mrs Wills and Sir Clifford Cory founding the Christian Alliance for Women and Girls in Wales. When Mrs Fidler demanded on the telephone that I return immediately and open her Bible shop, I informed her of the following facts. I spent at least forty hours each week running the shop and more hours taking books to sell on the various ships in port and made a handsome profit all of which I personally paid into Mrs Fidler's own Post Office account. Not only did I not receive any salary myself but Mrs Wills continued to pay my student's fees. I returned to Western Square but not to open the Bible shop but to close my account for all time with the Barry School of Evangelism.

I did not look back at the school as I sat in the car Mrs Wills had sent. Before I reached Lanson House fresh bed-linen and valances had replaced the dust-sheets in the best guest-room. None of us realised that my flight from the Barry School meant that I would be associated for the next four years as the son of the house, living on and off with the Wills family, and that after Mrs Wills died twelve years later, I would remain closely involved with her Knight cousins until the present day.

The heavy Victorian gloom of Lanson House exactly suited the life between its walls. Yet a kindness dwelt there which had been totally lacking at the school. In spite of Mabel Wills's strict adherence to a narrow, religious way of life, I became extremely fond of the old lady born in 1867. The ponderous ritual of living in that house exerted a strange hypnosis over me. But Mrs Wills considered herself as being far from old-fashioned. Had she and her husband not been the first private residents in the town with the telephone? Had their's not been the town's first motor car? Yet curiously, changes in the world at large were not ignored by Mabel. The house on one side had been turned into flats where washing was flown in the back garden, even on the Lord's Day. The house on the other side had become an hotel where people sat in the garden drinking beer.

Nevertheless, we were a little world of our own, a microcosm of Victorian manners. We changed into house-shoes on coming in from the garden, though true, Mrs Wills did not altogether approve of the Austrian housemaid leaving the washing in order to rush over and kiss her mistress's arthritic hands at every appearance. Some time passed before I became accustomed to Miss Howe, the lady-housekeeper. She was a small dainty, creature, who climbed the staircase with asthmatic difficulty to suck a secret supply of oranges in her room. Naturally, Miss Howe was saved and she broke

bread with the Plymouth Brethren. But lady and Christian though she undoubtedly was, Mrs Wills never trusted her with the housekeeping keys for longer than the exercise of her duties demanded.

After hearing the morning postman come through the garden, I would lie in bed waiting for Miss Howe to wake and go along the corridor. She went to collect the linen bag of keys from Mrs Wills's bedside table. Even then I could not get up for Miss Howe was so slow and took aeons to empty her C A - Certain Article. In some of its appointments, Lanson House seemed to hark back to the period when the young Misses Pethybridge were presented to Queen Victoria. Although the upper floors were adequately equipped with what are known as modern conveniences, each bedroom nevertheless had to have its C A enshrined in a ponderous throne-like commode. Mrs Wills and all her family believed that in order to keep 'Master Satan' at bay good health was essential and that meant being 'regular'. But keeping regular was a most frightful business. The slightest hint of constipation subjected the sufferer to a most detailed catechism.

When Miss Howe got the bag of keys she unlocked the bathroom and filled Mrs Wills's brass can with hot water. The bathroom was locked to stop Sylvia playing 'water babies' during the night. By this time Mrs Wills blamed her husband's treatment of curing her daughter Sylvia's rounded shoulders as a child by making her lie for hours on a hard board, as much part of her condition as Evan Tredegar's black magic during which, at the age of twelve, Sylvia had danced naked with Evan's sister in rituals. Few days indeed passed without Evan's name being mentioned in horror.

The result was a huge woman with white hair known as a joke in the town and not until four o'clock in the afternoon did Sylvia get up to eat a meal. If she was not out of the kitchen by five when Miss Howe went to collect her keys again, for drawing-room tea, there was always a row. This, like all the major domestic crises ended with Mrs Wills standing at the foot of the stairs and addressing Sylvia's possessing demons - 'Satan, I command you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to come out of this child.'

Sylvia's next two hours were passed in the bathroom, the door of which remained wide open for she liked to know of anyone else's existence while following her favourite occupation. She filled the washbasin until it almost ran over. Then she stood with her hands resting in it and gazed with peculiar intensity at her reflection. At seven o'clock this ungainly Narcissus went out of the house to sit in cheap cafes talking to anybody who would listen about a First World War soldier who had promised to come back and marry her. Like her mother and brother, Sylvia would soon turn conversation to the wicked Lord Tredegar and his witch's hand and cloak and how he liked to take off his clothes before men and women.

When our supper was over and hot-water bottles and night-comforters had been carried upstairs, the day's last job began - heating Sylvia's water. All rooms and cupboards had to be locked up because of Sylvia. She was apt to remove things from the house and give them away to the first person she met outside. And since she spent the night roaming about the house it was necessary to have such chattels as there were well out of reach. When she came in from her pathetic wanderings around the town, Sylvia expected her three large jugs of hot water to be ready together with a specific number of toast slices. We could not expect to remain quietly in our rooms if Sylvia found one of her jugs gone cold so that it could not top up the pot of strong tea also left on the stairs, or if she saw that she was one piece of toast short. The water, the tea and the toast together with other food had to be left on the stairs for Sylvia herself to carry up to the old night-nursery because Miss Howe, being a lady-housekeeper, could hardly be expected to do so. In any case, Sylvia preferred to sit on the stairs with her food until early next day when she heard Miss Howe's alarm clock and vanished to the night-nursery.

Mrs Wills's favourite Gospel tract took the form of a little booklet called **My Debt to Christ** which, at the price of four pence, was regarded as expensive when first published in 1934. But Mabel Wills did not mind stocking up with it since the proceeds were 'Devoted to the circulation of **Our International Letter**.' The author of this fourpenny tract was Princess Despina Karadja. After the death of Queen Mary's mother the evangelical flock experienced considerable difficulty in finding another royal shepherdess, and the Christian Alliance for Women and Girls considered themselves lucky to have the Greek Princess Despina as their international president. The princess concluded **My Debt to Christ** with, 'In the person of the deeply Christian friend, Miss Ingibjorg Olafsson, who has shared my life for the past ten years, God has graciously given me the greatest possible help for the development of my spiritual life, and to her I owe more than words can express.'

Miss Olafsson hailed from Iceland and was often identified as the princess's lady-in-waiting. I had met the pair before they came to Barry for Mrs Wills's golden year celebrations with the CAWG. On my first visit to Brighton with Ernest Bryans we had gone to their home, Stella Maris, on the clifftop at Rottingdean to have tea with the two religious ladies. Stella Maris turned out to be one of those small bungalows which disfigure the Downland's abrupt drop to the sea all the way from Brighton to Newhaven. It differed from its neighbours only in possessing an equally ugly two-storied annexe at the back built for the princess's servants, but occupied by soldiers during the war. In addition to being ardent evangelists the two ladies were recognised art historians and rare books crammed their home alongside slides by the

hundreds of architectural subjects taken in the 1920s and 30s.

Because of her family's importance in the Greek Orthodox Church affairs, the princess had been active with Archdeacon Sharp's Anglican mission promoting church unity in Southern Europe, and while the two ladies went around photographing cathedral domes and towers they encountered Guy Burgess with the Archdeacon and Captain Macnamara MP. Their unique collection of art-history books went to London University where their friend Sir Anthony Blunt taught for so many years.

But the princess was Swedish on her mother's side and spent much more time researching in the ancient university of Upsala than she did in Athens. TS Eliot was not the only British author who Elizabeth Sprigge at the Ministry of Information wanted to arrange some deal for the release of Pastor Niemöller from a concentration camp. Eliot wrote his most famous play **Murder in the Cathedral** for his friend and fellow-poet, George Bell, ex-Dean of Canterbury Cathedral, but by the time Eliot was lecturing at Upsala University in 1942, George Bell had become Bishop of Chichester and was speaking out against the RAF bombing of German cities. The bishop's criticism angered Churchill and his Minister of Information, Brendan Bracken, who maliciously responded by ensuring that despite Bishop Bell's great intellectual ability he was not made Archbishop of Canterbury in 1944, the year I first met the bishop's friend Princess Despina.

We met through Adam Fox, then a canon of Westminster Abbey faithfully taking Ernest Bryans to the Albion Hotel in Brighton, the town where Tom Driberg liked to keep up with the famous High Churches and low dives along the seafront used by the sailors stationed in the land-base accommodated during the war in Roedean School. After meeting Princess Despina, we all had dinner with the Countess of Chichester and her daughter Betty Pelham who Tom Driberg and I knew as Dil de Rohan's friend in the 1940s and as a neighbour in the 1960s when she was married to Charles Beazley. Lady Chichester and her daughter lived in Rottingdean during most of the war, renting a house owned by an admiral then serving as a naval attache in Washington. The admiral was dead by 1980 but his widow very much alive when Mr Antony Hoolahan QC read to Mr Justice Jupp and his jury my correspondence with the admiral's widow.

The secretary who arranged Bishop Bell's wartime travels was Miss Mary Balmer who in the 1970s and 80s also served Bishop Eric Kemp as secretary in the same Chichester palace. It was Bishop Kemp who talked to me about Pastor Niemöller and afterwards I wrote to him on 11 September 1979, 'Perhaps you were surprised to see me in such a happy mood, especially in view of the dramatic revelation made to me by the High Court which served me by mistake with a copy of Counsel's brief setting out the facts of your

secret talks and the involvement of the Attorney General. I was particularly interested in our exchange about T S Eliot and his friend Bishop Bell and their literary and political exploits. I have not yet had time to confirm the facts about their wartime journey to Sweden, but since your secretary has been at the palace since 1941 perhaps it was she who arranged that remarkable journey. As I mentioned on Sunday, I have personal reasons for gratitude to you for having brought dear old Pastor Niemöller over to Chichester for the unveiling of the Bell Memorial, for on many occasions I shared pulpits and hospitality with his wartime friends who organised the mission to the Jews.'

It had been Dil de Rohan at the Swiss Desk and Elizabeth Sprigge at the Swedish Desk in Brendan Bracken's ministry who had quarrelled so bitterly. They competed not only over lovers, but also over their foreign contacts providing information on such matters as the movement of Jews. Sprigge and her network probably got more Swedish passports for Jews than Dil got Swiss ones. The High Court documents clearly show that I only met Dil because Pastor Fidler at Barry got into trouble for sending British money to Pastor Alexander in Geneva in bids to save Jews and the release of their friend and hero, Martin Niemöller. Although Niemöller was the founder and president of Pfarrer-Notbund (Pastors' Union) Bishop Bell of Chichester and the 'Pope of Russell Square' (T S Eliot), united with the evangelicals in seeking Niemöller's release.

It was Bishop Kemp who in 1976 got his chaplain to question my neighbours in Rottingdean about statements I had sworn in an affidavit for which I exhibited Princess Despina's letters dealing with her activities and my own during the war. Fortunately I kept those letters always written on the same sort of notepaper. It astonished me how such a well-known evangelical could flaunt such snobbery as that blue notepaper headed by a crown surmounted by a 'cross patee' with her initials in the circle underneath. Nobody would ever guess that this grand notepaper came out of a dingy Rottingdean bungalow crammed with old and most valuable books on art history. The princess's much sought-after spoken and written testimony always included reference to her upbringing in the Greek Orthodox Church, one family member 'having occupied the Patriarchal Throne in Constantinople.' Nobody could cap that one, but could anyone affect such coyness as the opening of *My Debt to Christ*. Only after great hesitation and much prayer, did I feel able to publish some of the experiences which had always seemed too sacred to relate, even to my nearest friend. A natural reserve makes it difficult. The simpering humility with which this brazen snobbery was delivered made me realise why Maurice Bowra enjoined his students at Oxford to 'natural open snobbishness, success worship'.

The gay clergy who referred to the princess and her so-called 'lady-in-

waiting' as the Ladies-of-Llangollen, not surprisingly celebrated black mass in an Oxford college chapel upon Bowra's appointment as Warden of Wadham, no doubt partly as a two-finger gesture at the hypocrisy of state religion. A church Canon Fox and I visited then in 1944, and which I continued to be specially associated with until 1976, was St Wulfran's in the downland village of Ovingdean where Tom Driberg's old vicar, Father Charlton, used to bring an actress friend to see the blind and wheelchair-bound Peter Harris from the local St Dunstan's Home.

It was in the same St Wulfran's Church that the organist, George Balcombe, introduced in his normal Quaker-fashion 'Peter Churchill' to 'Despina Karadja'. But to Peter's amusement the old girl stormed off outraged because George left off the 'Lord' and 'Princess' handles from their names, nor was she consoled when I pointed out that Viscount Churchill was the member of his family with the additional title of Prince-of-the-Holy-Roman-Empire. However, this was a harmless quarrel compared with those, for example Rottingdean loved to witness between Enid Bagnold, the novelist who never came to terms with being plain Lady Jones, and Cecil Beaton who she allowed to live for a time in one of her village properties. They both liked 'real royalty', not minor foreigners, at the first night of their shows and to dinner afterwards.

Because Enid Bagnold was collecting material about the history of Rottingdean, George Balcombe sent her photographs of the Princess Royal and her two daughters Maud and Alexandra, taken before the First World War at the old Balcombe home by the village pond. They had cycled there with Peter Churchill, a member of the royal household.

Two title-bearers who differed utterly from each other were Princess Despina Karadja and the woman to whom Katie Stewart referred simply as her 'Cousin Maud' who lived quietly as Lady Carnegie for most of her life, though she remained thirteenth in line of succession to the throne and when King George V went abroad, acted as a Counsellor of State. When she died in December 1945 *The Times* wrote, 'Princess Maud and her elder sister Princess Alexandra shared the home-keeping tastes of their mother and were happy in various pursuits and interests at Mar Lodge, Brighton and less often in London. They were seldom seen in general society.'

'General society' was hardly a term applicable to Evan Tredegar who long before Princess Maud married his cousin, loved going to Brighton to stay with his exact contemporary, Maud, because they lived at 14 Chichester Terrace, the house haunted by the ghost of seventeen year old William Leveson-Gower who Evan tried to exorcise. When Janet Street-Porter came to my home to interview me about the royal family's interest in the occult, the television cameras zoomed-in on the old Princess Royal's photographs from 14 Chichester Terrace. On 27 January 1972 Jane Langton, the Registrar of the

Queen's Archives wrote to me, 'Many thanks for your letter of January 18th. It was good to have news of you again. I was interested to hear of the collection of the Princess Royal, Duchess of Fife's, photographs at Chichester Terrace. If Viscount Churchill wishes to hand these to the Royal Archives for safe-keeping they would, I am sure, form a welcome addition to the collection here.'

However much the young princesses at Chichester Terrace liked Evan and Peter Churchill, chief page to their grandfather Edward VII, to read palms and go cycling to the Balcombes' old home in Rottingdean, their safety while in Sussex was the responsibility of Bill Polling whose son Dick would go to the Spanish Civil War with Peter, and return to Brighton with two war orphans. I often sat in the living room at Chichester Terrace with Peter Churchill and Bill Polling's sister, Mrs William Balcombe, whose son George was landlord to both Churchill and me and who owned the photographs Jane Langton wanted for the Queen's collection.

Although Evan and Princess Maud were related by marriage and had been close Brighton friends, their funerals as reported in the press show how Evan ceased to be a royal favourite and got himself and many of his friends, including me, into serious risk of criminal prosecution over royal photographs. Cousin Maud had been the Countess of Southesk since 1941, and *The Times* reported 'The King and Queen, with Princess Elizabeth, and Queen Mary were present at a memorial service for the Countess of Southesk, which was held yesterday in the Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace' and then listed other members of the royal family who attended or who were represented because of absence abroad.

Five years later when Evan died none of Queen Mary's family attended or even sent a representative to hear Father Martindale at the Farm Street requiem mass. But many were surprised that the Labour Prime Minister, Clement Attlee took the place of honour in *The Times* report simply by sending a minor representative. We remembered Evan's condemnation of Attlee's government for making people like Evan pay 19/6 in the pound on income tax and many applauded when Mary Herbert's brother kicked Nye Bevan down the steps of a Tory club. They wondered why 'Clem' Attlee, of all people, wanted to send a representative to a mass for a Playboy Poet who owned large areas in the East End where Evan had failed to win a Tory seat but Attlee got in for his Labour Party. Francis Rose, of course, went to hear Father Martindale, and later wrote a very revealing piece, 'Evan, who remained to his death one of my really true friends, was a very different person in those days from the quiet, kind, religious man with deep faith who died after the last war in great peace with his religion.'

I can only judge the great change in Evan by what came via Katie

Stewart and life at Lanson House with the Wills family. I had gradually come to understand that much of Katie's life had been spent as Mrs Wills's unpaid assistant helping poor girls from the North of England and the Welsh valleys to have a holiday at the Barry hostel, the Christian Alliance for Women and Girls. I suggested to Mrs Wills that the invitation to the Golden Jubilee Year celebrations should be to 'meet the National President, Princess Despina Karadja and Miss Katie Stewart.' This delighted Mrs Wills for she realised I had come to appreciate her attitude towards the vanity of titles, recognising what values she placed on 'Princess' and on plain 'Miss.' So the thousand invitations went out and the largest temperance hotel was booked for the grand reception following the Golden Jubilee Service.

Amongst the piles of acceptances that came back was a letter from Evan's solicitors asking me to return the Russian fur coat I had taken with me during my sudden exodus from his London home. I was outraged, as doubtless I was meant to be. Evan had given me the coat as a present, but because Mrs Wills so deeply resented having anything in Lanson House belonging to 'that wicked man', I had agreed to give the fur coat to an old man in a wheelchair who had been the Wills's coachman. Solicitors were asked to reply to the letter for they knew Evan of old when the firm was headed by Willie Pethybridge and Evan accused the Liberal leader at Cardiff City Hall of selling honours and corrupting youth.

Meanwhile I had reached the age of eighteen and Ernest Bryans thought I should go into teaching as this would provide the best escape route from both Lanson House and the religious wars. The Misses Warrell-Bowring owned and ran Adelaide College for Young Ladies with a boys preparatory department appended to the splendid house and grounds in Ilfracombe, North Devon. Although only months separated some of the young ladies' ages and mine, at the end of my first term the proprietresses thought me mature enough to take over complete charge of the boy boarders, some of them sixteen years old. After dormitory lights went out I started writing plays to produce and to act in both with the boys and with the girls and staff. I was happy. I was free. And it went on for two years, an arcadia rather than an academe, where my efforts in drama overflowed from the school into the local repertory company.

Saturday night receptions and concerts at Adelaide College or the much larger Alexandra Hall were attended by the public including Eric Payne, a retired executive with the Wills Imperial Tobacco Company. He always came to watch his young second wife, Sally, play the piano or act one of the roles I specially wrote for her. Their little adopted daughter Susan was a pupil at the school. Eric Payne was not only the authority on the Imperial Tobacco Company but since boyhood had been personally involved with the

Wills family because Gwendoline Wills made him her protege in his native Bristol.

In 1890 Gwendoline Wills joined another student contralto from Bristol, Clara Butt, in going to the Royal College of Music in London where Sir Charles Stanford coached the girls whom he called 'my two babies.' By 1892 the powerful voices of the two babies were heard on alternate nights in the title role of *Orfeo* at the Lyceum. Gwendoline Wills maintained her Bristol connection where the family tobacco fortune enabled her to seek out other singers less well-endowed. Bristol Cathedral Choir School formed a particular interest for her and she loved it when a favourite singer, Eric Payne became the Head Boy in 1902. They had known Eric and his family for years and felt an especial pride in the superiority music gave Eric over his cousins who, despite their grandeur, went off as nothing more than ordinary boarders to Radley.

Bristol docks and its ships taking Wills tobacco to the four corners of the British Empire had fascinated the choral scholar at the Cathedral School and prompted Eric's urge to join Scott's Antarctic Expedition of 1901, but his eyesight failed him. By 1921 Eric had spent nearly twenty years working for Sir Ernest Wills at Imperial Tobacco and in a position to help Harold Avery find Wills funds for Sir Ernest Shackleton to take command of the *Quest* and sail for the last time to the South Pole. Nobody doubted that the explorer's orphan son, Eddie, should go to Francis Nugee's house at Radley, and for many years both returned to Radley as members of the school council when the old mansion's main drawing-room was named the Bryans Room after my cousin Ernest. This all seemed most proper to the Wills family which, however, was far from amused when Eddie Shackleton, a former BBC producer in 1930s Belfast, went on as a Labour candidate to challenge another Wills favourite, Brendan Bracken, in 1945.

Long before those events, the watchful eye of Gwendoline Wills had not only fallen upon choral scholar Eric Payne but also on another musical teenager. While the Wills gave much of their tobacco and shipping profits to evangelical colleges, their main concern was Bristol University and what Gwendoline did for music, Sir Frank did for architecture, he being one himself as well as Lord Mayor of the ancient port. Patrick McClellan won an organ scholarship to Shrewsbury, but his parents insisted that he enrol at the Bristol School of Architecture rather than continue music as a career. Within weeks Gwendoline Wills had sent her chauffeur-driven Rolls-Royce which took Patrick to the Colston Hall in Bristol to hear Furtwängler conduct the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, and soon afterwards an uncle died leaving Patrick enough shares in a family company to make him financially independent and so free to follow his career in the theatre and opera.

Like most in that area of Belfast our parlour in Donegall Avenue was seldom used except to reach the penny-in-the-slot gas meter there and for piano practice after school. But when Patrick McClellan arrived with the Universal Grand Opera Company in 1936, our parlour became a bedroom for three string players who went up the avenue in immaculate evening wear as the grimy dockers were coming down it from work. With complimentary tickets I lost myself in the world of Verdi and Puccini.

On leaving the army after the Second World War Patrick went to Glyndebourne as Stage Director where we met up with our friends Kathleen Ferrier making her opera debut as Lucretia and Anna Pollak creating the role of Bianca in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*. Evan Tredegar did more for British opera than simply taking Lloyd George's mistress and princesses to his Covent Garden box with Puccini. Evan was overjoyed when his Etonian friend, John Christie, made an opera house beside his home at Glyndebourne in Sussex.

Evan's old enemy, Professor William Gruffydd, MP for the University of Wales and Chairman of the National Confederation for the Preservation of Welsh Culture realised that the great male-voice choirs hymning him and his fellow, magnificently-robed druids at the Eisteddfod should have access to a professional body. And in 1946, the Welsh National Opera Company was born, soon making a reputation with Verdi works rarely performed at that time such as *Nabucco*. And also soon Patrick McClellan in his kilt became a familiar sight in Cardiff streets when he joined the company. Myra Thomas, a local girl, became Patrick's assistant at the Welsh National Opera and a long-lasting relationship developed, for 'Big Pat' and 'Big Myra' were more than drinking pals, and even after Myra left Cardiff to manage Britten's English Opera Group, her Covent Garden flat became Patrick's London base and remained so until her death in 1990 when he moved to my Ealing studio.

Patrick is one of those still alive who shared my happy days in opera houses, but he is also a witness of my fall from grace with our mutual friends in the Wills family. Just as Percival Petter and Lord Beaverbrook sniffed out Brendan Bracken's boyhood religion, so Mrs Charles Wills wanted to find out which family company provided Patrick with his private income. She heard the terrible news from Billy Gruffydd that Patrick's family firm was an old distillery company specialising in rare whisky for export and the House of Commons.

I had earlier met Gruffydd several times with Alice Pethybridge who considered him a greater poet than Dylan Thomas and as early as 1924 she had recited Billy's verse for the BBC. The BBC London producer, Guy Burgess, seemed particularly friendly to Billy and his fellow-Liberal MP, Lady Megan Lloyd-George whose great love was the married Labour MP,

Philip Noel-Baker, known as 'The Chambermaid' from his ability to empty the chamber of the House of Commons in record time. Alas, Noel-Baker and I were not to bring much happiness into the lives of the Welsh friends, Megan and Billy.

When Eric Payne fell seriously ill on retiring from the Imperial Tobacco Company, his young second wife, Sally, asked Billy Gruffydd to stay with them during the convalescence since they had so many interests in common. By 1946 when I went to teach at Adelaide College, Eric could get along on a stick to watch his wife perform in one of my plays. They asked me at least twice a week to dinner along with Elsie Wailes, the art mistress who spent most of her time in class writing me long love letters until she was certified insane. Apart from my connection with the Wills family, Eric wanted to learn more about Billy Gruffydd's wartime activities since their friendship had ended on a sour note when Billy threatened to break up Eric's marriage to the beautiful Sally.

Billy's mud-slinging included much political argument. Long before Hitler's Final Solution of gassing the Jews, Mrs Mabel and Dame Violet Wills had financed the Mission to the Jews which in pre-war days meant luring them into de Courcy-Hamilton's Navy Missions and making Christians of them. Some members of Lord Mayor Pethybridge's party had defected, not only scandalised by the sale of honours and Maundy Gregory's blackmail activities, but horrified by the fact that many swarthy Jewish emigrés had been allowed to join the Liberal Party. In defiance, the defectors formed the Aryan World Order Movement and distributed offensive and disturbing anti-Semitic literature throughout South Wales.

Late 1942 saw the beginning of the witch-hunt in mid-Wales against homosexuals that disturbed J R Ackerley and E M Forster so much. By then Dennis Parry had been released from Cardiff Prison and after working the Gospel caravan he went to share his bedroom in Barry with the 16 year old Ian Paisley. As Mrs Margaret Turner was the sole person involved with the Gospel Caravan Mission with a car and petrol-ration coupons she carted the religious books to stalls set up in mining towns on market days, and returned the unsold ones to the nearest caravan. In the absence of the Barry students, Vernon Wills would go up to the markets and run the Bible stall. Some of the offending literature of the Aryan World Order Movement may have been found among the Bible stall material by the police who disliked Dennis Parry preaching about Hitler the Anti-Christ and the 'unnatural' practices of homosexuals such as Lord Tredegar. Simply because Eric Payne had spent his entire working life with the Imperial Tobacco Company did not mean, as Billy Gruffydd liked to suggest, that Eric was in any way involved with Vernon Wills's views on the Jews and their conversion to evangelical ways.

The exchange of letters between Eric in Ilfracombe and Billy in the House of Commons was soon pursuing me to Lanson House during the holidays for I too became rather fond of Sally Payne. Then one day as I was rehearsing a play at the Pavilion Theatre in Ilfracombe Evan appeared and ran to throw his arms in a very dramatic way about me and ask forgiveness about the Russian fur coat. Apparently he had read a press report of the Golden Jubilee at Barry and had seen his cousin's card with the special mention of her, and now wanted to thank me for having secured a reward in this way for her fifty years of devotion to the poor. Evan cried, as only Evan could when moved. He assured me I was his dearest friend because nobody else among his London friends, and certainly not Henry Maxwell, ever entered Katie Stewart's home which Evan loved so much. I would have another, and better fur coat.

The idea that I would be teaching in Devon pleased Evan because he often went there and would have his bones taken to his favourite church at Buckfast Abbey. Large sums from the Tredegar estate went to the French Benedictine monks who rebuilt the Devon abbey between 1906 and 1932 on the site of a medieval Cistercian monastery. I went on several visits to Buckfast and always came away seriously wondering if I should become a monk there. But I was kept away from the vow of celibacy by the dances at Adelaide College and my theatrical productions and also by my increasing involvement with Sally Payne.

Celtic blood flows in the Welsh veins as it does in the Irish, and Celtic is the temperament of this ancient race of poets and singers. Before the Romans came to Britain, Wales was the main stronghold of the Druid religion with its sacred island of Mona, now called Anglesey. Although the Romans conquered Wales in AD 78 the Druids continued their religion at secret altars up in the mountains and deep in the forests. Their sacrifices were often human, as Abraham's was to have been using his son Isaac until the Lord intervened with the ram in the thicket.

Billy Gruffydd standing on the ceremonial 'log of stone' in the magnificent robes of a crowned Druid with the thousands of people around him singing in Welsh to harp-music was awe-inspiring. Evan's performances in his witch's cloak evoking spirits of the past seemed like amateur dramatics in comparison, contrived to enliven a bored weekend house-party of Lady Cunard's guests. I had thoroughly enjoyed my two years teaching at Adelaide College in Devon and acting at the Pavilion Theatre. Now I had to flee from Ilfracombe because of Billy Gruffydd's rage against me. For years he had tried to seduce Sally Payne and wanted her to leave her husband Eric. I had obviously danced too much with Sally, and played husband-and-wife with her on stage too much, and now it had got out of control. Billy was writing

ten page letters full of threats and accusations that I had made the beautiful Sally pregnant.

I showed these letters to Evan, and he, of course, jumped at the opportunity to take my side against the despised but admittedly clever Billy. A painful side effect emerged from all this when Billy started writing reams of House of Commons notepaper to Alice Pethybridge. This led to her sister, Mrs Wills at Lanson House, finally abandoning the hope that I would join the Egypt General Mission as a teacher in one of its schools. True to form, next time I saw Alice Pethybridge she said, 'Why didn't you stick to boys, like our Willie?'

The first rumblings of trouble in Devon came in the form of a newspaper cutting Dame Violet Wills sent to Lanson House and reporting a production of *Suspect* at the Pavilion Theatre in Ilfracombe in which I played a Cornish parson. Mabel Wills took this very badly, here I was, a 'play actor' with my name in the press instead of serving my Lord and Saviour as she believed. When I was playing in *Suspect*, the Irish Players from Dublin came out on a season at the nearby Alexandra Hall, and so I met up again with Paddy Coyle from Belfast. The following summer I spent two months in London trying to get a suitable part in a play or a place for one of my own plays and there Paddy Coyle and I shared both the same theatrical agent and the same lodgings. Paddy invited me to meet again the lanky actress Jean Hamilton who had married an artist-writer, Humphrey Knight, who was the son of Mrs Wills's cousin Kathleen Knight.

Also staying at our lodgings in Kensington Gardens Square was that monumental Irish character Eoin O'Mahony, the State Prosecutor for Cork, but then at his chambers in the Temple defending Irish political prisoners. One of the people he had earlier defended, Brendan Behan, tells in *Confessions of an Irish Rebel* how he got a telegram in prison which read, 'I'm flying to defend you. The Pope.' On both sides of the Border in Ireland and on both sides of the religious wars Eoin O'Mahony was affectionately known as The Pope.

The Pope's appearance and flow of instant wit made him well-known in the Temple although overshadowed by another Irish member of the Bar, A M Sullivan, 'The Last Serjeant' who earned such respect from the judges and barristers that they elected him Treasurer of the Middle Temple in 1944. How different things had been in 1916 when Sullivan arrived in London to defend the wretched Roger Casement on a treason charge. Then Sullivan had broken down from exhaustion, but nevertheless rose to be the 'First Serjeant' in 1920. On both sides of the Irish Sea Mr Serjeant Sullivan became the advocate of law and order, as outspoken against the gun-happy Republicans as the cruel and often illegal methods used by the British Black-and-Tan

soldiers in Ireland of which Vernon Wills had been one.

Many did not like 'The Serjeant' because of his constitutional politics and shots were fired into his railway carriage soon after he received the little piece of black cloth called 'a coif' on becoming the 'First Serjeant.' Because Sullivan had been Roger Casement's counsel and the Pope defended Brendan Behan, their united defence of political prisoners was popular in the *ceili* dances around Bayswater and Cricklewood where Paddy Coyle and I went collecting money to pay for the defence. Not so popular with certain people among the reading public were the open-letters I sent out. Nobody but me had a typewriter at the Kensington Gardens Square lodging and so I put myself and it at Pope O'Mahony's disposal for those completely humanitarian causes he and Serjeant Sullivan with MPs from both sides of the House of Commons were then bringing before Parliament.

And so, in this way, I was initiated into the art of pamphleteering in the political field and learnt to wield the mighty weapon of the pen which has produced such drastic effects in British politics from the days when a pamphlet by Dean Swift brought the great Duke of Marlborough down, and which was specially used by figures such as Milton and Burke. In sending the Pope's open-letters I was asked to address them to my friends and add personal messages. One particular open-letter drew attention to the views on IRA prisoners on the Isle of Wight which a Labour MP, Tom Skeffington-Lodge, was airing, and only by inadvertence on my part, failed to mention his fellow-campaigner from the Tory side.

The Pope, of course, and Serjeant Sullivan are now dead, but not Tom Skeffington-Lodge and his then Commons colleague Eddie Shackleton. In 1982 Shackleton updated for the Tory government his *Review of UK Anti-Terrorist Legislation*. On 24 April 1975 Tom Skeffington-Lodge wrote to me, 'I tried to phone you today but have stupidly lost your number. So I wonder if you will ring me after you get this. What I have in mind is to try and get Eddie to be the chief guest at one of our Fabian Summer Garden Parties. And you may be able to help me persuade him to say "Yes."'

In the summer of 1947 I could not envisage that my open-letters of the 1970s would be vetted and approved by Labour Lord Chancellors and Attorney Generals who went into the Commons in Attlee's first government with the declared aim of abolishing the House of Lords whose leader Eddie Shackleton eventually became.

The more extremist Protestants might take exception to what Pope O'Mahony preached about humanitarian and all-party solution to the problem of Irish political prisoners held on the Isle of Wight. But Sir Otto Mundy gnashed his teeth over the open-letters I typed and addressed to him. Otto was very fond of Ireland and his Irish relations, the Montgomery family of

Blessingbourne. And he adored to go on official visits in the **Vigilant**, the flag-ship of Customs and Excise to inspect the posts along the Ulster Border, some of which had been blown up by the Isle of Wight prisoners.

In the days when Peter Montgomery and Henry Maxwell were sharing rooms at Trinity College, Cambridge, Otto delighted to indulge the young lovers at the theatre and dinner parties. When Henry became Evan Tredegar's special friend Otto wholeheartedly approved Maxwell's book **Ulster was Right**. When this book appeared in 1934, Blunt and Burgess were well known Marxists and Otto vainly tried to break up the friendship between his cousin Peter Montgomery and Anthony Blunt. Since Otto knew me through his former Radley teacher, Ernest Bryans, naturally he wrote to him about my political speeches at Lincoln's Inn Fields and open-letters. But Ernest had been a noted history and French master at Radley and he was deeply impressed by another of our supporters, Sir Shane Leslie. But Otto Mundy assured Ernest Bryans that what Pope O'Mahony and I were writing in our open-letters was codswallop. Shane Leslie preached Irish Nationalism and went around in an Irish kilt, yet he proudly held on to his British baronetcy and followed a princely life-style at Castle Leslie in Ireland, and like his friend Evan Tredegar had special rooms at Rosa Lewis's Cavendish Hotel. Given half a chance, Otto told Ernest Bryans, I too would love a baronetcy and an income to keep up a large castle if it came my way.

Our open-letters got a very different reception from Evan Tredegar who thought it good that two of his friends had now become mine too. He could not shower enough praise on Mr Serjeant Sullivan who had defended Roger Casement when the prosecution was led by the Attorney General, that selfsame bully F E Smith, who had started his career as one of Lady Wimborne's Protestant League secretaries. Only someone like Smith, a lover of little girls, including his daughter's school friend, Evan reckoned, would have introduced the so-called 'Black Diaries' showing the possibility of Casement having been involved in homosexual activities. After Casement was hanged in 1916 Evan Tredegar regarded him as a hero, and held Serjeant Sullivan in honour for taking on such a difficult brief.

Evan so idolised Percy Bysshe Shelley that he dressed like him and because that poet had gone to Dublin in 1813 to fight in the cause of Catholic emancipation, Evan himself went as a young Catholic convert to Ireland in the 1920s to support his fellow-poets Yeats and Shane Leslie. Evan loved Pope O'Mahony who was not only a fellow author and poet but also his brother Knight of Malta. Evan and Eoin both crossed themselves before and after eating while saying Latin grace, both devotedly said the prayers for 'The Conversion of England.' Both poets envisaged this conversion coming about not merely by making things better for the political prisoners on the Isle of Wight, but through titled converts, such as Evan and the Duke of Marlborough.

Many peerages still existing in the 20th century originated hundreds of years before the Reformation, such as Walter de Fauconberg created the first Baron **Fauconberg** by Edward I in 1280. I already knew this from the **Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis** which traced the name to Yorkshire where 'their descendants became extinct in the male line on the death, in 1815, of the last Lord Fauconberg, a Catholic priest of that Church which had been despoiled by his ancestors in the sixteenth century.'

The Church of the Immaculate Conception in Mayfair's Farm Street flourished with a brisk trade in titled people seeking instruction from such famous Jesuits as Father Martindale and later Father Robert Wingfield-Digby. And from our humble lodging in Bayswater Pope O'Mahony went off to mass in the front pew of Farm Street grandly reserved for Viscount Tredegar. In 1944 Evan had given me his solidly-bound copy of **Memorials of Mr Serjeant Bellasis** so that I could understand the background of Evan's Jesuit church at Farm Street and the position of the Hopes and Beresford-Hopes, the Oxford Movement and the Irish Church Question.

Evan also gave me the book to show how closely the evangelicals we knew in Barry resembled those of a century earlier. Young Bellasis had been taught to pray, 'Confound, we beseech Thee, O Lord, everywhere heresy and error, frustrate the machinations of Popery, whether within or without the Church. May all the devices of the Bishop of Rome against Thy sacred truth be confounded. Lord, may Popery soon receive its final overthrow, and Babylon long foredoomed, cease to oppose the earth.' Such utterance could have come as easily from Dennis Parry in 1944, while in the drawing-room at Lanson House mutilated hymn-books could be seen from which Cardinal Newman's beautiful hymn 'Lead kindly light' had been cut out, since Newman figured as the most wicked spiritual leader of the 19th century. However, the hymn's words and music particularly appealed to me, and when Evan came to hear me practise at Porthkerry Church our signature tune was 'Lead kindly light,' though the light in Evan's mind was often a tormented spirit from the past calling out to Evan as violent spasms of a trance shook him.

When Daphne Fielding went to London in 1925 she stayed with her widowed aunt, Lady Alexandra Worsley, and in her autobiography, **Mercury Presides**, Mrs Fielding says she became one of the 'Buckingham Street girls' with Bridget Parsons who 'were cultivated by Chips for their social graces.' Chips Channon was an American like his friend Brian Howard and both went to Oxford where Howard introduced Daphne to the future Marquess of Bath. As Marchioness of Bath, Daphne had a special vantage point from which to observe and write about Evan Tredegar, Bridget Parsons and Brian Howard and their circuit. When Longleat ceased to be a family home and opened its doors to the public, Brian Howard wrote to Lady Bath a poem with a line that

still haunts me, 'Hymns to murder have been sung.'

Lady Worsley got her Christian name from her godmother Queen Alexandra and she became her Lady-in-Waiting as the blurb to Daphne's autobiography points out. Another member of the same royal household was Peter Churchill who so hated his Christian name of Victor, after his godmother Queen Victoria, that to everybody from Queen Alexandra to the waiters in his Tangier restaurant the viscount was known simply as Peter, a fact which the chaplain at his funeral refused to acknowledge and to Hermione Baddeley's audible protests of 'Peter, Peter!' insisted on pompously referring to the 'Late Lord Victor.'

Lady Worsley was a childless widow and a potentially better hunter of prospective husbands for the 'Buckingham Street girls' than the two males who ran the house there, because Lord Gage 'who shared the house with Chips, was reputed to be a misogynist' while Chips Channon himself was also homosexual. From the stately Longleat estate in the war Lady Bath and her family would take pheasants to Rosa Lewis in the Cavendish Hotel where, according to Rosa, 'Young Evan's upstairs having twins.' Evan and Sir Otto Mundy, the Deputy Chairman of Customs and Excise, also saw that no shortage of wines or spirits affected Queen Mary who was billeted during the war with her niece the Duchess of Beaufort at Badminton House. Today, Daphne Fielding's daughter is the presiding duchess at Badminton House, beloved of the royal family for its horse-show events.

By the time I met Alexandra Worsley in 1947 she had become, along with her friend Mary Herbert of Llanover, a Woman-of-the-Bedchamber to the Queen, and being a widow without children she was sought after by the royal family at Christmas time since she was so good at playing the 'Sandringham Game' of getting down on all-fours in front of another person and pretending to be a cat until the other broke out laughing. Alexandra Worsley, like all good members of the royal household, kept her weather-eye open for scandals that might tarnish the royal image and she could hold her own with Fellows of All Souls at Lord Astor's dinner table or amuse Dylan Thomas when sherry-and-princesses were solemnly played at Evan Tredegar's home.

The diaries of Chips Channon state that Wardlaw-Milne in the House of Commons, 'made an unfortunate suggestion, that the Duke of Gloucester should be made Commander-in-Chief of the forces. The House roared with disrespectful laughter, and I at once saw Winston's face light up, as if a lamp had been lit within him and he smiled genially. He knew now that he was saved, and poor Wardlaw-Milne never quite regained the hearing of the House'.

It was difficult not to laugh at the unfortunate Prince Henry, Duke of

Gloucester, who was always happy on the estate of his friend the Earl of Yarborough, Lady Worsley's brother-in-law. Lord Yarborough was a rich land owner with 50,000 acres in Lincolnshire and other estates in Yorkshire and the Isle of Wight. His main seat, Brocklesby Park was famous for its architecture as well as its works of art, both indoors and outdoors, including a large collection of Greek and Roman sculpture assembled by Sir Richard Worsley, British Minister at Venice in 1780, and which rivalled the Hope collection at the Deepdene.

Apart from property, Lord Yarborough had inherited from his mother a number of other titles including the ancient baronies of Fauconberg and Conyers, making him the 'eldest co-heir of the two great Generals, the Duke of Schomberg and the Duke of Marlborough.' When he died in 1948 the ancient baronies passed to Lady Diana Pelham and her sister Wendy. The Yorkshire estate of Knedlington, complete with a picture gallery of old masters, became Diana's outright. A girlfriend and I were at the theatre one evening when a royal party swept up and during the interval Alexandra Worsley came over to speak to us, first greeting my friend enthusiastically because she was her niece, Diana Pelham, who I first knew as a no-nonsense nurse at a London hospital.

As soon as her father's will was proven, Diana gave up nursing and went off to find which part of the world she wanted to settle in. She certainly had no intention of being Baroness Fauconberg living at Knedlington Manor and raising a family as her mother envisaged. In 1958 when Diana and her mother had their big quarrel in the international press, the **Daily Express** splashed it onto the front page with, 'Lady Yarborough friend of the Duke of Gloucester and the Princess Royal, talked to me in her sandstone mansion, Harston in Lincolnshire, "I am so ashamed. It is a terrible thing to have produced a daughter who can behave like this...It is a fearful thing to be betrayed by own's own child."'

In later years, having read my 1963 book **The Protege** which I dedicated to Diana, Lady Yarborough concluded the family rot had set in with Diana consorting with such a 'wicked commie' as myself, for I had written, 'with growing leanings towards socialism and the hope that one day we would have children of our own, I did not want her to use the titles. She never did use them though they remain unavoidably hers by right. Neither of us cared to be prisoners of the past. My Ulster ancestors had doubtless crossed to England as harvest labourers. Doubtless they wandered the English roads with stick over their shoulders and bundles on the ends done up in blue handkerchiefs. Diana's forbears had strutted around Windsor with the blue garter. But what did we care for them or for the yawning social gulf between them? We sucked the sweet juice of our hours together until the present day

was dry. Past or present were unreal as we lost ourselves in a play, or sat chatting in a quiet corner of the Ladies' Carlton Club or wandered on bright Sunday mornings in Regent's Park.'

I did not set out to antagonise Lady Yarborough, and indeed from what she knew of my family I seemed to be a perfect future son-in-law. Brocklesby Park is not only famous for its art and architecture but also for its foxhounds, just as the Pelham relations at Clumber were noted for their special breed of spaniels. Diana's father had been the Master of the Brocklesby Hounds and, in his activities as a huntsman, was close to that other hunter, Kathleen Duchess of Newcastle. Through these connections the rich Ernest Bryans was well-known to Nancye Yarborough. For four years Ernest had tolerated my presence when we met at Oxford or Brighton, but as soon as he realised that I might have a son and that a member of the Bryans family would become the 'eldest co-heir' of two among his favourite generals, Schomberg and Marlborough, the former history master at Radley, began to cultivate me.

To avoid further head-on collisions with Billy Gruffydd I was advised to leave Ilfracombe and take a teaching job at Clayesmore in Dorset, a manoeuvre watched with not a little amusement by Ernest Bryans and his former pupil, Otto Mundy whose references I still used. The former headmaster was now the school's warden, since Evelyn King sat in the House of Commons as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Town and Country Planning. Otto sneered at him for being yet another 'Cuckoo in the Nest.' And Otto was right, for Evelyn King crossed the floor and spent most of his parliamentary life as a Tory. When free of weekend duties at Clayesmore I went to London to keep abreast of new plays with Diana Pelham, but as she was often abroad looking for a suitable place where we might settle I often took the bus into Bournemouth to keep abreast with old friends there.

Brendan Bracken had been, however briefly, to Sedbergh School in Yorkshire, but it proved long enough for him to soak up like blotting paper all things to do with Yorkshire gentry. Through Evan, Bracken met Bridget Parsons and her brothers and could quote to them the history of the family estates at Womersley Park and Denby Grange in Yorkshire. He had never met Bridget's eccentric cousin who bred racehorses, yet on 6 July 1956 he wrote to an Australian friend, W S Robinson, 'Miss Parsons, the daughter of the great engineer, and a lady of vast wealth and no expenditure save on horses, eggs and a gas-ring, was knocked over the head by one of the gentlemen she employed to guard her crumbling house.'

Until there was talk that Diana Pelham might marry me, Brendan had been polite but distant since he wanted to put a screen up between himself as the young adventurer at Tredegar Park in the early 1920s and the statesman of the 1940s. But as Minister of Information Brendan fully understood that

his old enemy Hugh Dalton made so much trouble about Brendan's past that Clem Attlee declared 'This man is not fit to be a minister in the middle of a war.' But Dalton had observed in his war diary, 'I think that we just don't deserve to win the war. We are all fighting each other instead of the enemy, and with such zest. P.Ms entourage...Mr Bracken...Eden and his telegrams.'

Hugh Dalton grew up in that closely-knit company of royal retainers at Windsor since his father was Chaplain-in-Ordinary and Deputy Clerk of the Closet to Queen Victoria and Edward VII, as well as tutor to the future George V. Dalton was quite a snob about his royal past as can be seen in the 16 March 1943 entry in his diary, 'I dine with Behrens and some thirty people. Here I make a rather successful impromptu speech, about Queen Victoria, and my father (they lap this up), and King George V, and the old pussycat's remark to my mother about my "having gone the same way as poor Arthur Ponsonby."'

Hugh Dalton and Edward Beddington-Behrens were not only friends but also lecturers at the London School of Economics and the year after this dinner, Edward married Princess Irena, daughter of Evan Tredegar's friend, Prince Serge Obolensky. By the time I dined at Edward's in 1963 for his step-daughter's birthday party, the guest list must have numbered 300. Dalton's phrase that he had 'gone the same way as poor Arthur Ponsonby' is most significant.

The Ponsonby family, the Earls of Bessborough, were Irish like the Marquess of Conyngham. It was Lord Conyngham, in his role of Lord Chamberlain, who rode hard to Kensington Palace in June 1837 to inform Princess Victoria that she was Queen of England. The young Queen appointed Conyngham's daughter, Lady Jane Churchill, a Lady-of-the-Bedchamber and because they were related, Victoria's children referred to her as Aunt Jane. Jane's grandson, Peter Churchill, joined the royal household in 1901 as Page-of-Honour to Edward VII.

Lord Bessborough's son, Sir Frederick Ponsonby, became Queen Victoria's Private Secretary and Keeper of the Privy Purse for many years. And in 1932 Sir Frederick's son Arthur, a Page-of-Honour to Queen Victoria, became the Labour Party's Leader of the Opposition in the Lords. As Peter Churchill had grown up in the royal household with Hugh Dalton and Arthur Ponsonby, he naturally approached an old friend, Arthur, in 1934 on becoming Viscount Churchill, when he started Labour's Political Research Bureau.

It was, however, another of Queen Victoria's godsons, Lord Louis Mountbatten with whom Peter had a close association in political and Indian affairs. Peter not only wrote art criticisms for Labour's *New Statesman*, but often stood in for and then succeeded, Tom Driberg as William Hickey on the Tory *Daily Express*. Before then Peter had completed a course at the

Sorbonne in Paris and wrote, 'All the same it was with Indians that I felt most at home. Before long I found myself sharing rooms with a group of stranded Indian musicians from the Court of the Nizam of Hyderabad. They gave me lessons in the *tabla* and taught me as much of the *vina* as my non-Indian-trained ear would allow, and I arranged concerts for them. The smell of Indian cooking in our apartment was familiar and comforting.'

Lady Cory's gay friend, Willie Pethybridge, arranged the musical evenings Peter went to at 28 Belgrave Square and they usually included the Cory relative, Guy Liddell and his cello, and the daughters of Princess Christian whose royal household had been run by Guy's father. Anthony Blunt and Guy Burgess served under Guy Liddell in MI5 before Blunt joined the royal household as Surveyor of the King's Pictures.

During those pre-war days when Adeline de la Feld blasted away in the press at Hitler and Mussolini, a favourite resort for members of the royal family and their households was Forest Farm. From Adeline's papers I inherited I can trace quarrels within the royal family as an ever-recurring theme. And another member of the Mountbatten family, the Marquess of Carisbrooke told Harold Nicolson of the jealousy at the court between his grandmother, Queen Victoria, and his uncle, Edward VII. Carisbrooke's published dislike of his first cousin, George V, particularly struck me with its claim that the King so humiliated his sons before the royal household and servants that, 'on one occasion the Duke of Gloucester fainted.' Certainly Prince Henry of Gloucester did a fair amount of shouting himself when he learnt of his mother, Queen Mary's humiliation on her last visit to Evan Tredegar's home, and the role I played.

My friends of the Left admired the Indian politician Krishna Menon, and I was an early member of his India club whose curries Peter Churchill much enjoyed. However, when Dickie Mountbatten wanted somebody to show his nephew, Prince Philip, around Parliament before the marriage with the heir to the throne, Princess Elizabeth, Mountbatten asked Tom Driberg. No secrecy shrouded the fact that Left-wing sympathisers existed in a number of royal residences.

After all, Winston Churchill's close friend and Minister of Information, Brendan Bracken, had been teaching in Rottingdean when he met Peter Churchill who introduced him to the royal favourite, Evan Tredegar. But just as Evan introduced Brendan to the publishing world as 'a young Australian' so Brendan tried to run away from his Irish Catholic upbringing in the 1945 Bournemouth election. By 1949 I was running away from the MP for the University of Wales, Professor William Gruffydd.

The idea that I might be going to live at Knedlington in Yorkshire, and that a resultant son of my marriage might be eldest co-heir of the Churchills

brought an immediate invitation to dine with Brendan at Sweetings in Bournemouth where he went when holding constituency meetings. I liked going into Bournemouth and keeping up with Brendan as well as my friends from the Sacred Heart Church who had been so outraged by his agent's pronouncement that Brendan had no connection with the Catholic Church. My invitation to Sweetings did not stem from Brendan's curiosity about my plans for the future but from his eagerness to exercise his extensive knowledge of Diana Pelham's inheritance. Curiously he was in no way snobby about it, unlike Evan who adored ancient titles with pre-Reformation backgrounds. Brendan himself would one day become Viscount Bracken of Christchurch but would never take his seat. When Ernest Parsons wrote to congratulate him Brendan replied on 1 February 1952, 'Many thanks for your letter. According to Gilbert and Sullivan the House of Lords do nothing in particular. That is the proper place for me.'

Brendan had to be the centre of action. He was a bully, as many claim, for even in conversation he seldom let others interrupt his monologues made up from a jumble of architectural titbits about Yorkshire houses, Australian families, randy duchesses, Thomas Hope's descendants and their wealth, and how the war was won, and the General Election lost. But he never took a bullying attitude to people who had tolerated his eagerness to get on as a prep school master, and he had a particular fondness for Katie Stewart. However much he knew about the great houses of the Pelham family, and the glory that once was Canford Manor when Winston's Aunt Cornelia, Lady Wimborne, was the chatelaine and founder of her own Protestant Society, Brendan delighted in returning to Yew Tree Cottage where he got Risdon Bennett to talk about raids on High Churches.

High Churches so often had sinister associations such as the priests at Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, having to flee before the writ-servers arrived. Many such gay scandals were involved with Evan Tredegar's black-magic circle and Brendan Bracken was fully aware how the murders and suicides connected with Francis Rose had to be covered up. I only saw the two bachelor Bennett brothers weekly whereas I saw one of the two Megaw sisters from Northern Ireland several times a day since Ena ran the Claysmore kindergarten while her sister taught at Sherborne Girls School.

Their uncle, Mr Justice Megaw had recently died, but before going to the bench Megaw had been a Unionist MP and knew well Basil Brooke and his Cambridge secretary, Alfred Arnold. But long before Sir Edward Carson sent the Rev Charles Maguire and his delegation to the USA to explain the legal status of the new state of Northern Ireland within the British Empire, R D Megaw had been called to the Irish Bar in 1893 and became its Professor of Common Law at King's Inn, Dublin in 1912.

Ena Megaw and I were close friends aware that Louis MacNeice's world contained malignant figures such as Sidney Smith and his child sex-abuser friends on both sides of the Border and we felt sure they would never be brought to trial. But not only the abused children's interests had to be considered but those whose guilt led them to suicides which had to be passed-off as accidents.

Sir Christopher Lynch-Robinson was another barrister from pre-partitioned Ireland who also had the call to King's Inn, Dublin, and his brother Adrian followed Megaw into the Ministry of Home Affairs at Stormont. Considering the family cover-up of scandals, it was regarded as imprudent for Sir Christopher to assume by letters patent the surname of his mother Harriet Lynch-Blosse, of the Marquess of Sligo's family, so very soon after Lord Mountbatten's daughter married into the Sligo family.

Two years after this change of name, I would be getting Ena Megaw to take my prep class at Clayesmore while I cycled over to Yew Tree Cottage with the latest news 'From the North,' for Evan Tredegar might well have raised the spirits of the dead in spectacular fashion in Ireland as various authors have written, but he had also driven some people to take their own lives. One of these was a cause of great sorrow to Brendan Bracken.

Not only old companions from the 1920s such as Brendan and Peter Churchill, but many others who had since married and begat children were alarmed when Evan died and his heir at Tredegar Park, John Morgan, openly talked about Evan's sadist gear. Evan and Brendan had been prolific letter writers and both relished the dark-room at Honeywood House where Evan developed his photographs. The boycott by Queen Mary and her relations of Evan's memorial service did not surprise Brendan nor that a Labour Prime Minister, Clem Attlee's representative headed the mourners.

Evan had gone too far and although he was dead his old enemy, Billy Gruffydd, was writing me letters the language of which Brendan had never read the like before. One of Brendan's biographers, Andrew Boyle, interviewed me on a number of occasions. These came to an abrupt end when Boyle was bidden to Whitehall where, according to A N Wilson writing in the *Evening Standard*, Boyle's life was threatened by a mandarin whose name he dare not reveal.

Brendan did not live to see publication of Dalton's war diaries and how Labour could rely on Professor Gruffydd's support in the Commons, but by 1949 Brendan was fully aware that Billy Gruffydd still intended to wreak vengeance and demonstrate how Brendan was not a fit person to be a leading member of the opposition in peace time. When Brendan went to Tredegar Park in 1922, Billy was wearing the crown of the National Eisteddfod, basking in fame as the *History of Welsh Literature's* author, and as a Liberal

too, enjoying the esteem of Prime Minister Lloyd George and that other notable Liberal and Secretary for the Colonies, Winston Churchill. By 1948, however, this former huddle of Liberal friends sat on opposite benches in the Commons while Billy and Bracken shared nothing but antipathy for each other.

Sally Payne continued to pass on to me Billy's threatening letters which in turn I passed on to Brendan who, like me, found Billy's repeated references to 'the real special branch this time,' amusing yet disquieting. The Second World War gave the word 'Special' a special meaning because the part-time police, recruited largely from men too old to join the armed forces or others exempt from fighting, were called the 'Specials.' Blunt's Cambridge friend from the 1920s, Henry Maxwell was a Special as was another Old Harrovian, the actor and composer Derek Waterlow. When Brendan, or any of his ministry staff such as Dil de Rohan, wanted to use the arm of the law to resolve awkward situations, both in their propaganda work and their private relations, Henry and Derek adored to be called in to sort matters out.

Derek's family had 'come down in the world' following a conspiracy and massive fraud against the firm of Waterlow & Sons, whose chairman was Derek's father, Sir Edgar, and which printed money for the bank of Portugal. Derek and his Spanish boyfriend Jose and Derek's nephew Rupert all lived in small flats in the big block called Chelsea Cloisters which had a ground floor restaurant where we all ate when nobody had any money and the cost had to be put on the family account. Another theatrical person Derek had known from Harrow, Cecil Beaton, lived near by. Just as Beatrice Lillie said that 'Christopher Robin is now known as Alice,' so Cecil Beaton was then known as 'Cecily Seymour' the name given him by Lord Berner's spoof novel *The Girls of Radcliff Hall*. Jose died mysteriously in 1948, another death rumoured to be not unconnected with Frances Rose whose never-good relationship with Derek consequently deteriorated even further.

Derek Waterlow's Chelsea flat served as a convenient theatrical gathering place dominated by various generations of the Howard family. During the year in which Cecil Beaton met Francis Rose he chanced to sit next to Leslie Howard in the theatre and *Gone with the Wind's* celebrated Ashley asked Beaton to work in films with him. But Beaton desperately wanted to be a playwright and at long last his *The Gainsborough Girls* was produced in 1951 even though Leslie Howard's son Ronald walked out of his part in it. The post-war Howard who made his name in the 1980s is Alan, still a schoolboy in 1948 when his actor parents brought him to Derek Waterlow's flat where we listened to privately-made records of the musical *The Big Smoke* which we believed would make us all a fortune.

Punctually at six every evening Maurice Berkeley would knock at 836

Chelsea Cloisters before he and Derek went off to any other engagements. Maurice was an Etonian friend of Evan Tredegar and as an impresario he persuaded Evan to finance the orchestra, large chorus and stars for the recording of **The Big Smoke** which, as the name implied, featured a none-too-reverent view of London. This was the time when the American musicals were taking London audiences by storm much to the annoyance of many people including Evan, so we all looked to Derek to create in London a brilliant spectacle of Cockney life. As Tredegar House and its large estate was in London's East End, Evan wanted Derek to load the script with witty innuendo and satirical portraits of friends to outdo Gerald Berners's mockery of Cecil Beaton as Cecily Seymour and another Chelsea neighbour, Oliver Messel as Olive Mason.

The Big Smoke was to have more than a touch of that sort of thing, for in his 1928 diary Cyril Connolly noted how Evan had told him that 'the East End was utterly promiscuous and bisexual.' Even in religious matters Evan could not refrain from making facetious remarks so that, for example, instead of going to the widow's cruse of oil, the prophet Elisha went on a cruise with a widow. Daniel Skoropadsky found this so amusing that rather than adopting Evan's Catholicism, as the Holy Father wished, Danylo merely took up Evan's flippancy. In a biography of Danylo, his fellow-designer at Thomas P Headland Ltd, Howard Daniels wrote that Danylo had 'a fine sense of humour. It often exhibited itself in the middle of conversation when someone would use a word which he considered funny. Then he would break off the talk to make a joke round that word or phrase - very often a "double entendre," which resulted in laughter all round.'

Since the largest and richest of the United Hetman Organisations were among the Ukrainians in the USA and Canada, the Catholic bishops there took considerable interest in Evan's efforts to win Hetmanych Danylo for Rome. Perhaps more for his good looks than for his soul, Danylo had a great admirer in the Cardinal Archbishop of New York. David Heymann wrote of Evan's friend Jimmy Donahue, 'It was common gossip that Jimmy liked to cross-dress and entertain his mother's friends, including Francis Cardinal Spellman, while attired in petticoats, a dress, wig, falsies and high heels.'

Since this pantomime dame stuff was the order of the day, I wrote a sketch called **Going Down Town** and within an hour Derek Waterlow had set it to music. In those days, scripts had to be submitted to the Lord Chamberlain's office which immediately saw that my words were a send-up of two highly-placed homosexual men much in the public eye and known to indulge in fellatio for which the vernacular in those days was 'going down town.' The Lord Chamberlain was less enthusiastic than Evan over this bawdy piece and when Evan gave his biggest post-war gay party he put up enlarged photographs

on the theme of 'going down town.' Evan had obsessively religious friends besides Eric Gill who liked to draw and photograph their penises in all stages of excitement. For me the best thumbnail sketch of Evan remains that by Harold Nicolson, 'his bedside table littered with photographs of royalty in silver frames, and one of the late Pope cheek by jowl with that of an able-bodied sailor.'

Remembering her own hard-up days in Florence, Queen Mary did not like her trusted friends, especially in days of food and clothes rationing, to be inconvenienced by royal visits, so during her afternoon drives she would call without appointment on such people as Sir John Fortescue, the retired librarian at Windsor Castle, or at Evan's where she could expect to see some of her sister-in-law, the Princess Royal's family. If Lady Fortescue would write of these royal pop-ins Evan certainly would not. Queen Mary arrived on the day of the 'going down town' party, and apart from the erotic photographs all over the place the butch sailors were disporting themselves very much like Jimmy Donahue before Cardinal Spellman. Although the Queen had come only at the early stages of the party, and was therefore spared the excesses of its later stages, there was still enough evidence to show her that Viscount Tredegar was no whit better than Earl Beauchamp, Evan's old friend and Her Majesty's 'Bugger-in-Law.'

For Lord Berners to send Queen Mary his book **The Girls of Radcliff Hall** was just the sort of hoax involving royalty that people loved at that time. I can appreciate the Queen not being amused with Cecil Beaton's **My Royal Past** since royal favourites such as Bridget Parsons, David Herbert, Michael Duff appeared to be mocking Queen Mary's own royal past. But in 1937 when **The Girls of Radcliff Hall** came out David Herbert was known to be Daisy Montgomery and Gerald Berners himself Miss Carfax, the school's headmistress. For years Sir Michael Duff had been arriving at parties dressed as Queen Mary for not all that queen's cast-off clothes had gone to Anthony Blunt's family.

It certainly was not simply a high-camp exercise to tease the Queen Mother who liked to pick out the high campers to play the Sandringham Game. Another recorder of Evan's black magic rites, Seymour Leslie, also adds in **The Jerome Connection**, 'At one of the post-war Royal garden-parties she (grandmother) was accosted by Queen Mary. Granny of course knew perfectly who it was, H.M. being the daughter of her fat and popular friend, Princess May of Teck. "You have such a sweet, kind face! I'm only an old woman and can't remember your name!" Brisk came the reply, not in the least taken in, "I'm the Queen."'

In referring to the pails of water coming through the ceiling of Francis Rose's studio during the royal visit, Sir George Catlin said, 'I was never told

whether Queen Mary's sense of humour rose to the occasion - she was a stern lady, with a long knobbed umbrella which she was capable of using - but that Sir Francis himself was thrown into a condition of near panic I do know.' Queen Mary certainly did not use her umbrella at Evan's party but marched out of the house with more dangerous intention. Evan's panic lasted until the day he died.

In 1946 Anthony Blunt was appointed Surveyor of the King's Pictures. His assistant at the Courtauld Institute, George Zarnecki stated of Blunt, 'He was a snob about the royal family and he hated the masses. I remember that he was thrilled when he was knighted. When Queen Mary came to the Courtauld in 1946 she was very friendly with him and the present Queen Mother and the Queen always called him Anthony.'

For years the royal family had taken advice from Evan Tredegar on works of art, but now as Queen Mary and her family irreversibly ostracised Evan, it was to Blunt's lectures at the Courtauld that Queen Mary turned up in the afternoon certain to find nothing that would offend. But just as Blunt had been asked to bring the letters back from Germany, so now the Surveyor of the King's Pictures was asked to get from Evan all photographs of members of the royal family, and in particular any of Prince George of Kent. This was a relatively easy task for Blunt since he had been at Cambridge when Henry Maxwell shared Peter Montgomery's rooms at Trinity. With the war over, Henry was no longer a Special policeman and knew that Queen Mary was indeed 'a stern lady' determined to have her own way.

Evan kept most of his photographic equipment at Honeywood House outside Dorking, a house well known both to Henry Maxwell and Peter Montgomery. Peter had visited Dorking for years to see his cousin Ralph Vaughan Williams whose family owned two estates in the neighbourhood, and for years everybody had taken it for granted that Henry Maxwell would inherit Honeywood House from Evan. But now, as Evan handed over to Henry all the royal photographs, negatives and letters that might embarrass the royal family, he also told Henry to remove his own pictures and books from the house. Evan was once again proving Nancy Cunard right when she told Ronald Firbank's biographer that Evan was 'A fantasy who could be most charming and most bitchy.'

Even before Nancy Cunard herself became a fantasy Evan had grown up in South Wales where his uncle, Canon Stewart, presided as rector of Porthkerry and his wife, Lady Beatrice, as Queen of Barry. Of all the rich and titled people who figured in Evan's early contacts with that Protestant circle, only one renounced wealth and her position in society to become a missionary in Africa, Mary Wills. When she came home on furlough in 1946, Mary was still a dazzling figure if no longer young. She had earned a notable reputation

as an eye surgeon and she spoke Arabic as fluently with her Egyptian women patients as she did French at Lanson House where that language was favoured as also at Tredegar Park.

Of the three Wills children Evan taught to swim Mary was the most graceful in or out of water. On her post-war visit home Mary preoccupied herself with raising money for a Farm Colony in her missionary society and at one of the drawing-room meetings arranged by Katie Stewart for that purpose, Evan appeared and rushed to embrace Mary with whom he had shared happiness in their youthful years. Katie surprised nobody when she told us later that Mary's target for the new Farm Colony had been reached, and we all knew that Evan must have given the largest sum. As it could not be seen that the Pope's chamberlain was financing a Protestant cause, Katie Stewart and I put a notice in the press saying that Dr Mary Wills had returned to Egypt grateful for the response to the Farm Colony, and sent a copy to Evan.

In 1946 Mary and I visited Dr Arnold Aldis who wrote to me on 9 September 1987, 'I only got to know Mary Wills when she came home on furlough and much later when Mary developed disseminated sclerosis, my wife used to visit her in St David's Hospital. We both of us had a great affection for Mary who was indeed a courageous character and bore her long illness with such patience and cheerfulness. Mary of course served in Egypt with the Egypt General Mission, and my father and Douglas Porter, the Home Director of the E.G.M. were close friends.'

I felt glad that Evan was spared the sight of the lovely Mary Wills for years lying immobile in St David's Hospital unable even to hold a book to read. Evan and I had known some rogues such as Francis Rose whose friend and financier, Cecil Beaton, associated with 'killings', but we also knew some Christians who gave the whole of their lives to their faith and to 'good works.' Another person who resembled Mary Wills and Katie Stewart in that way was Hugh Montgomery who could have remained a secret Catholic until his grandfather died when he would have inherited Blessingbourne. In its obituary of Hugh headlined 'Diplomat-priest Extraordinary' the *Universe* said, 'Clerical life did not come easily to him. He had an incredible ability to "put both feet into it" only matched by his desire never to hurt the feelings of others. His remorse if ever he thought he had done so took an immense amount of assuaging.'

Hugh was a trained British diplomat who later, in his 1960s writings as a papal chamberlain, wrote in the way that Evan spoke. In his entries for reference books Evan always put with pride that he had first become a papal chamberlain of Cape and Sword to Benedict XV. Hugh explained this in a 1963 *Cosmos*, 'It was on my first visit to Italy, in 1921, still with no official position, that I was received in semi-private audience by Benedict XV who

was the last Pope to come of the old nobility, a son of the Genoese Marchese della Chiesa.'

Benedict XV came from the same old nobility which produced the great Doria Pope, Innocent X, who was dominated by his rapacious sister-in-law Olimpia, and painted by Velasquez. This portrait in the Palazzo Doria was admired by Benedict XV when Prince Filippo Doria owned the estate and Evan and Hugh Montgomery were regular visitors. By 1933 Prince Doria's nephew, Manolo Borromeo, hoped to marry Barbara Hutton and joined my future publisher, Morley Kennerley, in her private train carriage. David Heymann wrote, 'Borromeo accompanied the group to San Francisco, and it was there that he purportedly popped the question. Barbara planted a passionate kiss on the count's lips promised to consider his proposal, and left him behind as she joined her companions aboard the steamer *Lurline* bound for Hawaii, New Zealand, Australia, Malaya, Fiji, Samoa, Bali, Java and Siam.'

Prince Chula of Siam was always delighted to show Evan the Ceremonial Hall of the family's Phya Thai Palace when Evan took his yacht to the East, but the latest crew of favourite sailors were much more interested in the ceremonial ball that took place when Jimmy Donahue appeared in the nude or with 'falsies and high heels.' But it was not only Cardinal Spellman of New York who appreciated Jimmy's high-camp drag act. The *Universe* obituary of Hugh Montgomery noted, 'Ordination was finally decided upon and the First Minister returned to Rome in a cassock as a first year student at the Beda College (Memorable is his performance as a middle-aged spinster in an Edgar Wallace play!')

When the nobleman Benedict XV made Evan his chamberlain the Pope hoped that Evan would gather other sons of Europe's great houses into the Roman fold. And who among those could compare with the de Rohans and their haughty motto, 'Cannot be King. Will not be duke. I am Rohan'? The beautiful Prince Carlos de Rohan with the startling violet eyes was 27 years old and looking for an American heiress to marry so that he could keep up his lifestyle as an officer in the German army. As if in a fairy story, the handsome prince had an oil heiress appear before him in the form of Dil, granddaughter of the Standard Oil Company's president. Dil's family however, were old American Quaker stock that used 'Thee' and 'Thou' in their speech, and while Dil's mother eagerly participated in buying her daughter the title of princess, she absolutely forbade Dil to become a Catholic, so although the wedding took place in the Catholic church of St Mary in Cadogan Street, Dil remained Protestant, the register being signed by her Ulster guardian, Lord Ernest Hamilton, while the Catholic Ambassadors of Spain and Austria acted likewise for Dil's violet-eyed prince.

Dil remained a favourite with the ducal Hamiltons and was bridesmaid to Lord Ernest's daughters when they became Princess Alphonse de Chimay and Lady Buchanan-Jardine. For many years the press had plenty to print about the Ulster Hamiltons since they were major figures in the royal household until the Duchess of Abercorn died in 1990 as Mistress of the Robes to the Queen Mother.

Queen Mary's affairs rested in the hands of Lord Claud Hamilton, her Comptroller, Treasurer and Equerry from 1936. Lord Claud felt highly gratified when his friend Anthony Blunt was made Surveyor of the King's Pictures in 1946 and like Queen Mary, he went to hear Blunt 'do his stuff' at the Courtauld, and whether or not as a royal duty, equally enjoyed going to 28 Belgrave Square when Lady Cory gave her musical evenings at which Guy Liddell played his cello or Wilfrid Blunt gave a song recital. Yet the name which appeared most frequently in press reports of royal-attended weddings and funerals was that of Princess Carlos de Rohan.

I was at Clayesmore in Dorset when Derek Waterlow phoned me to ask if I was going up to London at the weekend, because Diana Pelham's aunt, Lady Worsley, had been in touch about something that worried Buckingham Palace. Derek had known Diana's family since childhood, and Nancye Yarborough and her sister Peggy Colman went into peals of laughter just at mention of Derek's name. As a precious five year old boy Derek had listened as the butler called the names of departing guests when their cars drove up after one of his mother's receptions and Derek shouted 'Lady Colman your mustard tin has arrived.'

Over forty years later a no-less precious Derek was trying to outdo Noel Coward in sending-up the upper-classes, hence the innuendo in *The Big Smoke*. And it was about our musical that Lord Claud Hamilton wanted to see me because in my *Going Down Town* skit I had referred to a member of the royal family and he wanted to know my sources. Thirty years later I would again reveal those sources, this time in an affidavit for Mr Justice Jupp's jury. But for the moment in 1948 it suited Buckingham Palace and me to side with the newly-appointed Surveyor of the King's Pictures in keeping matters out of the press, especially the American press.

Lord Claud wanted to contact his 'dear Dilly' but Princess de Rohan was in France and the young man in her London flat had actually said 'Pogue Mahone,' when Claud telephoned. This was about as much Gaelic as Claud and Dil ever learnt and it means, 'Kiss my arse.' Anthony Blunt had told Claud that I might be able to help the palace solve some of the mystery surrounding the young man John Willis and find out, for example, if it was true that he had been with the group of gays in New York who cut off the penis of an American serviceman.

Dil had written to me with more evidence about John Willis by 1965 when I went to the inquest on his death, and Blunt agreed with me that Buckingham Palace should be wary of blaming too much on Evan Tredegar since most of the scandals involving members of the royal family had in fact originated not with Evan but with Francis Rose and John Willis. Although Barbara Hutton and Jimmy Donahue had met members of the royal family long before 1948 it was only in 1950 that Jimmy started his affair with the Duchess of Windsor and proudly told the press 'She's marvelous! The best cocksucker I've ever known!'

Then Lord Claud quizzed me about my association with Pope O'Mahony and the Irish Political Prisoners, because the open-letters I typed had disturbed many people in Northern Ireland where the head of Claud's family, the Duke of Abercorn was governor. But the Pope in *The Landed Gentry of Ireland* was termed 'O'Mahony of Dun Locha' and as such would appear with me in the harmless pastime of National Trust cricket at those stately homes such as Castle Coole, where Lord Claud and Princess Dil had spent so much of their childhood. Although so many of the Hamilton family had over the years sat as Unionists in the House of Commons, in the 1960s Peter Montgomery, Anthony Blunt and I would ask the family to help separate politics from religion by not wearing the provocative Orange sash when they stood for parliament as Unionists. Ian Paisley had become a leader of Petter's National Union of Protestants and by May 1948 Paisley felt sufficiently sure of himself to warn the heir to the Protestant throne, Princess Elizabeth, about the dangers of dancing and attending horse-racing on a Sabbath Day during a visit to Paris.

Lord Claud was nephew of Lady Alberta Hamilton whose son the Duke of Marlborough had, to Evan's delight, become a Catholic and the Ulster mother sent her famous telegram to her son 'To Hell with the Pope.' There was a long struggle behind the throne on how far the members of the royal circle should be involved with the Orange-Unionist hold on power in Ulster and, as far as I had part in this, the matter peaked in 1970 when the Duchess of Abercorn's cousins the Duke of Westminster and his trustee, Michael Crichton who had known Anthony Blunt since 1921, were of sufficient news value for the BBC to announce that they had been expelled from the Unionist party. I, and not Blunt, had to explain this on Ulster Television, since it was Westminster and his trustee who brought my book *Song of Erne* to royal notice with reporters present and this was seen as a gesture of respect for the working-class Protestant as well as Catholic people who feature in that book.

When Dil returned to London in 1949 from her long stay in Paris, she was as cross with me as with John Willis for having allowed students to sleep

in her living-room and steal her pictures. But she was also cross with Evan Tredegar because he had now died and left her nothing from his many millions of pounds. Evan had procured for Dil a suitable prince, at a suitable price, in the person of Carlos de Rohan because, being homosexual, Carlos made no sexual demands on Dil after a first attempt on their honeymoon. Her response to Evan had been an assurance that she would consider becoming a Catholic when her Quaker mother died and have Evan as her godfather. Dil kept her word and took instruction but by the time Dil was ready to be re-baptised Evan himself had died leaving his fortune to the monks of Buckfast Abbey and other charities, and just as he had secretly given a large sum to the Farm Colony in Egypt, so he had listened to Clement Attlee, who had first become Mayor of Stepney in 1919. Under Attlee's influence Evan made numerous improvements on his own and other East End estates, and that was why, when royalty shunned the disgraced Evan's funeral, the Labour Prime Minister Attlee sent a representative. But the Prime Minister was beginning to realise that perhaps Dalton had not after all been unbiassed in his wartime opinion of Evan's protege, Brendan Bracken.

Dalton had been one of two founder members of the Cambridge Fabians, so aptly summed up by Anthony West, 'The founders were Rupert Brooke, the almost excessively pretty poet, and Hugh Dalton, a young man with a monumental presence and an unusually resonant and solemn speaking voice who was already on the upward path, from one poker-faced solemnity to the next, that was to make him a figure in the first Labour Cabinet to take office.' Rupert Brooke became the close friend of another Cambridge writer, Edward Marsh whose high-pitched voice was taken for that of a woman when he answered the telephone while running Winston Churchill's office.

Like Dalton, Sir Sidney Waterlow the diplomat had also been to Eton and Cambridge. Derek loved to visit his Uncle Sidney at various embassies around the world since the broad-minded uncle allowed Evan Tredegar and Derek to bring home as many sailors as they wanted. Before going to Bangkok in 1926 Sir Sidney was at the Foreign Office when one of Dalton's Labour colleagues had to call. Dalton wrote, 'Entering timidly he asked whether Waterlow could recommend him a bed-sitting room on a quiet and respectable street near the office. Waterlow would be a better authority on bed-sitting rooms that weren't respectable!' Now perfectly aware that Sidney Waterlow was indeed an authority on disreputable bed-sitting rooms, Dalton wrote in November 1929, 'The Wellesley hurriedly proposes Waterlow for Rio, and the others all eagerly support this idea. They know I have backed Waterlow and think I can't resist this. It is agreed that Waterlow should have the offer.'

In addition to supporting fellow Etonians, known for their scandalous

private lives when Dalton's career could be served by it, he also gave doses of his gall to Old Etonians within the Labour Party. Dalton observed in his war diary, 'Faringdon, a pansy pacifist of whose private tendencies it might be slander to speak freely.' Lord Faringdon had proved himself a courageous if indiscreet Treasurer of the National Council for Civil Liberties during the war, but Dalton's main interest in Gavin Faringdon was his connection with Brendan Bracken.

After Evan Tredegar got the Roman Pontiff to interfere with the Duke of Marlborough's marriage, Brendan took the Churchill side, which was the side on which Bracken's bread was buttered, and quarelled with Evan. Still in his twenties, Brendan turned to the 'pansy pacifist' Faringdon who happened to be Brendan's neighbour in North Street. Harold Acton has stated of Brendan, 'He used to blow in and out of Lord Faringdon's little house while I was staying there in the mid-twenties.' And it was with Gavin Faringdon that Brendan set forth to discover the antiquities of Italy. Venice captivated Brendan and on 6 October 1928 he wrote to Evan's great enemy, J L Garvin, from the Palazzo Morosini, 'I have found the peace which passeth all understanding in this dear city.'

Brendan Bracken certainly appeared to have a good understanding about the extensive haul of ancient sculpture acquired in 1780 by Sir Richard Worsley, British Minister in Venice, from among which some had to be selected by Diana Pelham's family for sale to pay her father's death duties in 1948, a task in which they received professional help from Anthony Blunt. Before this, on 12 November 1947, the Labour government lost its Chancellor of the Exchequer, for the man with the loudest voice in parliament whispered injudiciously to a newspaper reporter about the Budget before delivering it in the Commons. Listening to the General Election results in 1945 Dalton wrote 'the defeat of Bracken, coming early, gives me a tremendous thrill.' It certainly thrilled Derek Waterlow and me when we heard of Dalton's downfall, sympathetic though we were to honest Clement Attlee..

Waterlow Park is today's best known memorial to Sir Sydney Waterlow who gave his North London estate to the London County Council when he was Lord Mayor in 1872. Legal history links the name with 'the crime of the century' when a Portuguese called Alves Reis got Waterlow & Sons, the security printer of banknotes and stamps, to print notes that would have given Reis control of the Bank of Portugal. Much has been written about the case and in *The Man Who Stole Portugal*, Murray Bloom quotes Sir Cecil Kisch, the Foreign Office authority on central banks, 'the greatest swindle ever perpetrated . . . the stupidity of Sir William (Waterlow) as being largely responsible for the complete success of this great confidence trick. He was a pompous man and like all pompous men, preferred to rely on his own

judgement rather than trust that of others. They should have concentrated on the question of actual loss suffered by the Bank of Portugal instead of on the technical details. Sir John Simon intended to do this in the House of Lords appeal and just before he had to remove himself to become Foreign Secretary he told me he was confident Waterlows would win on this issue alone.'

Sir William had not consulted with Derek's father, and other Waterlow directors with the result that the firm had to pay both the costs and vast compensation to the Bank of Portugal, and although there were reserves to meet this, the firm never fully recovered. The Waterlow case and its lawyer, John Simon, interested Hugh Dalton considerably. Indeed, Dalton hated Simon intensely and wrote in his diary for 6 September 1939, 'Having regard to our frequently expressed views of the PM and Simon, we could not enter a Cabinet in which these two were Numbers 1 and 2. As Chamberlain, Simon and Hoare disappeared from the Government altogether, we should be prepared to discuss the question of entering the Government.'

In the event, Dalton had to contend with Churchill and the loathed Brendan Bracken, while the hated Simon stayed in place as Lord Chancellor until Labour's victory in 1945. By the time of Dalton's downfall in 1947 Derek and his nephew Rupert, heir to the baronetcy and the once-great house of Waterlow & Sons, were living in small flats at Chelsea Cloisters. This irked Derek in particular because he had a white piano in his bed-sitting room and crammed in as many singers as possible from *The Big Smoke* to repeated knocks on the door from irate neighbours complaining about the noise. Derek did not want to go on paying a high rent for such inconvenience and had his eye on a large mews house nearby which would make an excellent studio. So we both proposed to buy this because Derek believed that I had been libelled and had a clear case of getting substantial damages.

Two friends, Ivor Novello and Noel Coward, dominated London's theatre world in the 1930s and 40s. I knew Ivor and his boyhood friend Keneth Kent also an actor, author and producer, nicknamed 'Buddha' by Ivor for his serenity which calmed people in distress who went to Keneth as a Spiritualist. As the receiver of stolen jewels who murdered his blackmailer in *The Shop at Sly Corner*, Keneth scored a hit, and after playing an impressive Napoleon in *St Helena*, Ivor sent a note, 'Buddha. Its marvellous and you are superb - far finer than I hoped. You're most moving and I'm proud of you and happy to be here. Love Ivor.'

Evan Tredegar bitterly resented the friendship between his former Cardiff friend Ivor Novello and Keneth Kent, the actor regarded by many as a more commanding Spiritualist medium than Evan whom they dismissed as a playboy playing games at country house parties. Certainly Evan's presence when I first knew him during the war did not inspire people in distress to seek

his company. The last photograph ever taken of Ivor was by Lady Juliet Duff, and she, together with Churchill's former secretary, Sir Edward Marsh and a host of famous theatricals, tried but failed to stop Ivor going to prison for a trivial offence and it was hinted that a piqued Evan had not helped the proceedings. Certainly when I knew Evan in 1944, he drove me all over the place with illegal goods, though perhaps he got more than the normal wartime petrol ration by virtue of his many official duties. Certainly many of the princesses who had sipped Evan's sherry, followed Queen Mary's example and kept away from Evan's requiem mass at Farm Street. Even so close a follower as Francis Rose admitted in his autobiography that Evan 'perhaps went too far.'

Only with Evan's death at the age of 55 did those injured by Evan openly talk about the trail of unhappiness the Playboy Poet left behind him during his lifetime. There were not only people such as Henry Maxwell whose loss was notional rather than actual in that contrary to expectation he did not inherit Honeywood House, but also sailors who had been seduced in hopes of getting a more practical reward than merely having their photo placed between the Pope's and Queen Mary's, and then there had been the young men who had committed suicide or been murdered by Francis Rose's set simply because Rose had to keep up with Evan's violent change of mood. Major Ware could control the Tredegar miners' rents but it took Sir Francis Rose to control the rent boys. With Evan himself dead, the survivors poured out their hatred of him.

By April 1949 Ivor Novello and Noel Coward were looking for a play which would put Kenneth Kent back in the limelight he had lost after **The Shop at Sly Corner**, and thought they had found such a play in **The House on The Sand**, in which Kenneth, being deserted by a young male friend, married a pregnant girl played by Sarah Churchill. The young man had gone off wearing his best friend's overcoat which becomes subject to dispute on his reappearance. The old mother shoots the young man for daring to come back and wreck the marriage of convenience. This plot, innocuous enough by today's standards, was thought by many theatrical people at the time to satirise my relationship with the Tredegar family, because no secret had been made about my row in public with Evan over the Russian fur coat nor of the fact that I had become close to Evan's Russian wife.

The play opened at the Q Theatre at Kew where Winston Churchill went to see his daughter in it despite the play's homosexual overtones, regarded as daring at that time. Society, ever vulnerable to shock, received another one soon after Oscar Wilde went to prison, for a writ was served on 15 February 1896 in the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court between Winston Spencer Churchill, Plaintiff, and A C Bruce-Pryce, Defendant. The

writ stated, 'There was for instance one man whose initial is C. flogged publicly by a subaltern court-martial for acts of gross immorality of the Oscar Wilde type with Mr Churchill.' An out of court settlement was reached and Bruce-Pryce withdrew the 'Oscar Wilde type' charges against Churchill.

Claude Soman was the licensee of the Playhouse and years passed before he finally persuaded the Lord Chamberlain to allow **Tobacco Road** its English debut at the Playhouse and even then the young hero had to turn his back on the audience to pee. Claude did not confine his 'pyjama parties' to his suite in the Grosvenor House Hotel, but liked fun-and-games in his private box during plays, especially if Queen Mary were on the other side of the thin partition. Claude was most anxious to get **The House on the Sand** transferred to the Playhouse and he had been optimistic about the play's prospects when Sarah Churchill accepted the role of Rowena Wetherby and her father and Brendan Bracken turned up to see her play it. And he thought those prospects brighter still when talk turned to my suing the author and the Q Theatre over misrepresentation, since no advertising of the play could do half as much for publicity as getting it into the High Court.

Derek Waterlow thoroughly enjoyed litigation despite his family's loss of their fortune when on the 28 April 1932 the House of Lords rejected their appeal against the Bank of Portugal. Although John Simon had to retire from the Waterlow case on becoming Foreign Secretary, junior counsel, Norman Birkett, remained to be led in the Lords by Gavin Simmonds. Birkett also remained on friendly terms with the Waterlow family and Derek was most anxious to consult him about **The House on the Sand**.

Most of the week I was in Dorset teaching at Clayesmore and took my troubles to Risdon Bennett at Yew Tree Cottage. His admiration for Lady Wimborne's four Rodney grandsons remained undiminished even though they had all grown up, married and had children of my age. Out would come the scrapbooks of press cuttings about those four boys and the First Boy Scout camp on Brownsea Island. Pride of place in Risdon's affection was held by George Rodney not because he had inherited his father's title but for shaking off the mummified traditions and snobbery of a dead past, and had pitched a tent in the middle of the Canadian Prairies and with blizzards and temperatures constantly far below zero had started to raise his young family. This impressed me and Diana Pelham's aunt and uncle, Peggy and Freddy Colman, who had just come back from a stay with their friends the Rodneys, and within a month Diana and I were invited to start our married life in Alberta. I had enough savings to buy a farm, and fond though they were of Derek Waterlow they advised me against signing a lease on a mews house with Derek since Peggy Colman laughed at Derek's mustard-tin joke but took seriously his mother's attempts at suicide, and she, as well as the white piano pounding out

all day and half the night, would not be the best setting for a young couple setting up home.

At the Q Theatre Winston Churchill showed less interest in homosexual relationship on stage than he did in the fact that I would possibly be making my home on the Canadian Prairies with his cousin George Rodney. If he knew of my past with Evan Tredegar, Churchill was better informed on how a member of his family had beaten the Socialists to buy Cottesmore Farm. When he first went to Canada George Rodney had inherited not only the title as the famous admiral's descendant but also the hereditary state allowance as did the descendants of Admiral Lord Nelson. But whereas the Nelsons held on to their allowance until the Labour government defeated Cousin Winston as Prime Minister, George Rodney had surrendered his many years before for a lump sum, and Winston's advice proved to be good advice, for the lump sum bought Cottesmore Farm in Alberta among other investments. The Nelsons got no lump sum from Hugh Dalton, the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

But although Hugh Dalton no longer had an official address at 11 Downing Street, the divided Labour Party still sought his political skills. Dalton determined at all costs to prevent another of his enemies, Herbert Morrison, from succeeding Attlee as Labour leader. Although Hugh Gaitskell was the most obvious candidate among Dalton's proteges in the Commons for the leadership, Dalton's favourite companion was the handsome Tony Crosland whose name appears so frequently in Dalton's postwar diaries. On 7 July 1952 Dalton wrote, "Tony Crosland tells me he and Hilary Sarson are going to get married. This is, as John Freeman says to me "a very moving day." He has urged Tony to marry Hilary for some time. He had been a playboy long enough. More on this in private diary." Crosland had occupied much space in both the political and the private diaries, and many were urging the young MP to exchange his life-style as a playboy for that of a married man.

Meanwhile Derek Waterlow did not feel completely happy about Norman Birkett's opinion of the idea that I should sue the author of **The House on the Sand**, since central to any court action would be the reason for my quarrel with Evan and my departure from his house with a fur coat. In 1941 The Political Warfare Executive was set up and this came under Anthony Eden the Foreign Secretary, Hugh Dalton the Minister of Economic Warfare and Brendan Bracken the Minister of Information. The director-general of the Political Warfare Executive was Bruce Lockhart described by Dalton as 'Oh what a weak, dissolute, spineless sponger!..such a boring apologetic tale of debts and night life!'

In his own war diary Bruce Lockhart spells out the cost of wining and dining that former prisoner in Moscow who was also his former mistress, Baroness Budberg. Most information I passed on to Dil de Rohan during the

war, also reached Moura Budberg as well, but in her **How Do You Do?** Dil writes of Moura and Bruce having to sign indemnifying papers saying they were in complete agreement with Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer over the filming of Bruce's **Secret Agent**, because earlier MGM had been successfully sued by Evan Tredegar's friend, Prince Yussupov, for misrepresentation in the film **Rasputin**. Dil felt quite as outraged as Henry Maxwell did at getting nothing in Evan's will. They both blamed me for it because it was considered that my skit **Going Down Town** had inspired Evan's lewd photo exhibition which had so offended Queen Mary and caused her to ostracise him which in turn caused the royalty-outcast Evan not only to change his life from the profane to the sacred but his will also. The thought of all those millions going to the Buckfast monks rankled bitterly with the always hard-up Dil, so the very least they expected of me was to try and replace the fortune denied them in Evan's will, by suing **The House on the Sand**. The plan, of course, was to stir up publicity for the play by getting a gagging writ without the slightest of intention of going on to a full libel trial, for under no circumstances could Dil and Moura Budberg go into the witness box and explain our wartime work for Brendan Bracken and Bruce Lockhart.

Although Hugh Dalton hated Herbert Morrison, he was aware that Morrison, as Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the House of Commons, had collected some clever young men around him, including his PPS, Eddie Shackleton, but as Dalton wrote on 11 May 1951 'it wouldn't look well to have too many Morrison's nominees in office.'

During 1972 when Tony Crosland was out of office, his journalist wife wrote a profile of Lord Chancellor Hailsham for the **Sunday Times** over which she consulted Eddie Shackleton as leader of the Opposition in the Lords. On 4 June 1973, Shackleton wrote a letter to me about Lord Hailsham, adding, 'When it comes to Parliament, it is very difficult to intervene, so to speak, in the Courts - all the lawyers tend to stand together.'

Raymond Blackburn was Shackleton's fellow-Labour politician, a lawyer who loved sending up the legal profession and especially judges and he also loved the theatre. He was not pleased in 1986 when Hugh Dalton's war diary came out with this 1945 entry, 'Blackburn is a bit shy. He calls me "Sir" rather a lot, which is very unnecessary, and is a bit too prone to flatter and too quick to agree. But he is under thirty, quick, active and ambitious, though I wouldn't trust him very far. He seems to have done well as a solicitor.' The Law Society would be obliged to strike the lively Raymond off its lists for even by the time in 1949 when he advised about **The House on the Sand**, he had been charged with drunkenness at Piccadilly Circus.

Although a Labour MP, Raymond never forgot the note of congratulation Winston Churchill sent him after his maiden speech in the Commons on the

United Nations Charter. The title of his 1959 autobiography **I Am an Alcoholic** would have equally applied to Sarah Churchill. Raymond was heterosexual and produced eight children from two of his three marriages, but he liked his good looks to be admired by Hugh Dalton and Derek Waterlow who was more than a little in love with him. Raymond probably found **The House on the Sand** unappealing but because the cast included Sarah Churchill and Winston came to see the play, Raymond had to be seen on the Churchill bandwagon. Indeed, some months later Raymond resigned from the Labour Party and called for Churchill - 'one of the great men of genius of all time' - to head a coalition government as in the war.

I kept up with Raymond through the theatre and the law courts, when Irish actors Patrick Magee and Denys Hawthorne joined us in both. But Raymond's elegant style in quoting Irish poets often lapsed into misquotation which made Pat's Irish temper flare with the equally quick-tempered ex-solicitor getting well-placed punches which everybody had forgotten by the time Raymond took a party to see Pat Magee's latest play. Raymond bought so many rounds of drinks for large theatre parties that by 1954 he faced bankruptcy proceedings. But this did not cramp Raymond's style and when he arrived late in court the judge thought he had seen the immaculate figure after lunch 'Preceded by a larger cigar than most bankrupts wear.'

Derek Waterlow and I admired Raymond's boldness in standing-up for the individual's rights and how he had dared to tell the ferocious Lord Chief Justice Goddard that his lordship had made 'a very wrong remark' adding that Goddard was 'determined to dismiss the appeal.' The judge warned 'You'd better be careful,' before doing exactly that. But in the law courts as in the Commons, Raymond could change his stance. In 1949 he had been keen to move the homosexually controversial **The House on the Sand** into the West End, yet in 1975 his great success lay in getting an Old Bailey jury to agree with him that the film **More About the Language of Love** was grossly indecent.

So despite Raymond's efforts Claude Soman did not have **The House on the Sand** transferred to the Playhouse in 1949, but forty years later Lord Havers, the former Lord Chancellor was playing a leading role in the Playhouse management. But before succeeding Hailsham briefly on the Woolsack, Michael Havers had been Attorney General and knew all the lawyers, Tory and Labour, had to stand together over the immunity from prosecution granted to Anthony Blunt.

But before granting that immunity the British and American governments had agreed to an embargo on the Hess papers until AD 2017, otherwise too much would come out about too many highly-placed persons still alive. This meant that Blunt could not go into the witness box in Mr

Justice Jupp's court and explain to the jury why Anthony Blunt went to the Gargoyle Club to see the rich people who supported Lonsdale Bryans and his 1940 German Resistance peace mission.

The Hon David Tennant, who was not quite as rich as his fellow-Etonian, Lord Tredegar, started the Gargoyle Club in 1925 and David's actress wife, Hermione Baddeley, became one of the major attractions. Eddie Shackleton met Hermione and her friend Lady Joan Duff-Assheton-Smith at my Brighton home in 1972. He had no time to spare in the 1930s, when Evan Tredegar and Lonsdale Bryans were ordering their champagne at the Gargoyle, because Shackleton was taking his Labour politics very seriously at the same time as producing for the BBC in Belfast.

After he was made a Knight of the Garter, Shackleton stayed with me in Brighton and I took him to a neighbour's party where the drinks had already made some younger guests aggressive. They started a quarrel over what they saw as a betrayal of principles by Labour politicians such as Eddie Shackleton and Raymond Blackburn, who took their Commons seats for the first time in 1945 when the Labour government had so startled the British Establishment. Abolition of the House of Lords was much talked about in those heady days, but many Labour people had nevertheless gone to the Lords in subsequent years, Shackleton indeed being not merely a distinguished Leader of the Upper House but a Garter Knight to boot and chairman of the Honours Scrutiny Committee.

Although I had made my own disapproval of the Lords clear in my 1963 book **The Protege**, I naturally did not want my house-guest Shackleton beaten-up by the drunk trouble-makers and so left quickly with him. As he wrote in a letter two days later, we stayed up until the small hours talking about politics and the odd-balls we had known such as Raymond Blackburn. We talked about 'Quintin', the then Lord Chancellor, Lord Hailsham, and Shackleton referred in his letters to what we said. I had made a special point of introducing Joan Duff-Assheton-Smith to Shackleton for I wanted him to hear from her about a matter that greatly troubled Hailsham. Being a daughter Joan could not succeed her father, Lord Tweedmouth, whose male heir was the brilliant Edward Marjoribanks MP until he took his step-brother's gun and shot himself. The step-brother, Lord Hailsham, wrote over forty years later, 'and there is a sense in which I have never recovered from the blow.'

There is a sense in which I have never recovered from Derek Waterlow's and Raymond Blackburn's enjoyment of litigation. A trial should be an examination of facts to establish truth. Witnesses swear by Almighty God that the evidence they will give the court shall not only be the truth but also the whole truth and, moreover, nothing but the truth. In most cases witnesses know that their perception of an event may be only a fragment of the truth yet

they swear by Almighty God, in whom they may or may not believe, to tell the whole truth. After being served with many gagging writs in attempts to prevent me from telling just a little truth about Anthony Blunt and Lonsdale Bryans, I came to the same conclusion as Lord Hailsham that 'all law is a gigantic confidence trick.' My disagreement with Lord Hailsham arose in 1968 when I sided with Oxford students over Irish issues.

Hailsham and I both had roots in East Ulster but as a boy I took my Orange sash and prejudices from Belfast to Fermanagh in the West. At Granshagh Farm I listened on many candle-lit nights to the elderly James and Lizzie Graham talk of Mrs Michael Jones who wanted a rose garden and thought nothing of completely erasing the historic cemetery of Lisgoole, so sacred to the ancient Kingdom of Oriel. How proud the Grahams felt of Archdeacon Pratt who fetched a ladder and removed the word 'Bible' from the Jones Memorial School name.

Until 1991 I would be defending the personal rights of the Churchill family when my correspondence with Lord Hailsham came before the High Court, and I pointed out to Mr Justice French that I objected to the Baronies of Conyers and Fauconberg, not because of their association with the Dukes of Marlborough and Schomberg, but their much better-known connection with another soldier, and one who slaughtered the Irish in Ireland, Oliver Cromwell. Mrs Michael Jones of Lisgoole Abbey, arrogantly bore the name of Cromwell's Parliamentary Commander, Michael Jones, who routed the Irish at Rathmines in July 1649. How Mrs Jones relished her copies of **Portrait of Oliver Cromwell's Mother: Portrait of Oliver Cromwell's Daughter, Lady Fauconberg: Oliver Cromwell's Pocket-Bible in 4 vols**, all from the pen of their direct descendant, Sir Walter John Pelham who was born in 1838.

I felt I was honouring the memory of Isaac Pratt when I wrote in **Songs out of Oriel** about Irish music sung by Hughie Slevin in the BBC Television film of my boyhood at Granshagh Farm, 'music that never lost its Celtic lilt since Slevins sang in Oriel despite all Cromwell's driving of Irish learning and tradition beyond Shannon.'

Stage Directions

Although being only Mrs Oscar Wilde's distant cousin, Adrian Hope was a near neighbour and friend in Tite Street, hence his guardianship of the Wilde children. In November 1891 Mrs Hope the artist wrote, 'I am deep in a portrait of Cyril Wilde, who is awfully picturesque and nice to do.' The royal family so admired the portrait that Adrian Hope wrote to his wife, 'Have just met Oscar who was killing about the picture of Cyril for which he said he expected a knighthood.' That other royal favourite, the Duke of Newcastle, whose mother Henrietta Hope had brought more than her fabled diamonds to Clumber, was naturally consulted as a member of Radley College Council when Cyril went under a pseudonym to join Ernest Bryans at that school while the unknighthed Oscar Wilde went to prison.

With its Catholic relics such as fragments of Charles I's coffin and James II's heart, More House in Tite Street was spacious and imposing enough for Evan Tredegar to regard it as his second London house where Dylan Thomas could expect stronger stuff than sherry and princesses. The owner of the house, Felix Hope-Nicholson referred to by the press as, 'the aesthete and dandy, Squire of Chelsea,' always rued the day when Eton refused him leave to attend Christie's 1937 sale at Clumber. At that sale John Martin's painting 'Fall of Babylon' fetched a mere 2 guineas whereas in 1819 Thomas Hope had paid the artist 400 guineas for it. In 1982 the picture surfaced again for £400,000. But later in life Felix managed to secure other Thomas Hope treasures, including the famous clock for the studio mantelpiece at More House.

It fell to Felix and me to deal with the problems of the Duchess Henrietta's granddaughters, Countess Borromeo and Countess de la Feld. Adeline de la Feld's nephew, Lord Rosse, had introduced his Eton friends to More House, including Brian Howard who became such a feature of the place that Felix's sister, Marie-Jacqueline Lancaster, wrote Howard's biography. Anthony Blunt and other red spies from the Gargoyle Club went to More House to rub shoulders with duchesses or pinch bottoms of young Guardsmen from the local barracks, conveniently near.

Living in the Dukes of Newcastle's former town house in Portman Square, which later housed the Courtauld Institute, Anthony Blunt became an authority on the Hope family history in and out of the law courts over sex and diamonds, and Blunt felt snubbed in 1967 and later, when Adeline de la Feld's part of the Newcastle estate had to be sold and she asked me and not him to

deal with Christie's.

The architectural spaces of More House are ingeniously interlocked and they lead to or from the splendid first floor studio which is hung with Mrs Adrian Hope's portraits of her family and friends, and crammed with a collection made by the Hopes over 400 years. The studio is approached through a stone arch, a proscenium for the stage-like setting beyond. And there, in 1918 at the age of nine, Hermione Baddeley rehearsed her role in *La Boîte à Joujoux*. At the advanced age of 16 she joined the Co-Optimists at the London Pavilion, singing lyrics written by Greatrex Newman with whom Patrick McClellan and I had become involved by the early 1950s when Hermione was already my old friend.

Hermione did not see the Co-Optimists run its six-year course because at 17 she became pregnant by the 23 year old David Tennant, a pilot much given to driving fast cars. His mother, Lady Glenconner, certainly did not want an actress from the Co-Optimists as a daughter-in-law, so rather than have an abortion, Hermione threatened to have the Hon David Tennant's child adopted, perhaps by somebody from the lower classes who was not even white. This spirited ploy forced Tennant to marry her. The Hon David's best-known relation, his aunt, Margot Asquith, the Prime Minister's wife, will be remembered for her use of the English language and the period of the Bright Young People, for it was she who remarked to Lady Cunard, 'What is it now? - drink, drugs or niggers?'

Poets and painters from the lower classes might indeed have mingled with the fashionable and intellectual throng on the golden stairs at the Gargoyle Club as they went down to dance with Edwina Mountbatten, that great lover of coloured men. Hermione adored Dylan Thomas for stealing somebody's bottle of wine and drinking it from his shoe, complete with hole in the sole. Dylan had a Welsh painter friend other than Evan Tredegar to lure him with a bottle, because the Gargoyle Club and the pubs of Fitzrovia were favourite haunts of Augustus John from Tenby, whose sculptor friend, Bill McMillan, did a striking portrait in coloured chalk of him, which came to me via Evan Tredegar who often sat for Augustus John. When Hermione saw the portrait she told me what Augustus John said the first time he met her, 'Madam, I am going to impregnate you.'

Hermione and I were survivors, the sex-kitten actress from the Co-Optimists and the cabin-boy from Belfast Lough, and although we both enjoyed sending-up the Establishment on stage and in books, we never joined our gifted friend John Minton, the painter, in peeing outside the homes of despised capitalists we regarded as rotters. How well-titled is Michael Luke's book, *Rotters and Bright Young Things: David Tennant and the Gargoyle Years*.

It was, however, Robin Maugham's unabated obsession with the criminal classes, even after, or perhaps especially after succeeding his father as Viscount Maugham, that led Hermione and me into what proved to be our last entanglement together with authority when one of Maugham's Brighton gang fled from a murder scene, never to be seen again. The parties given by Baroness Budberg drew Robin Maugham as they did his Uncle Willie, Somerset Maugham.

Of a party elsewhere Maurice Collis wrote, 'On my way down the Baroness Budberg, Korda's friend, whispered to me, "If there's any vodka, for God's sake keep me some!"' I have never known a pair of women devour a bottle of vodka so quickly as Moura Budberg and her old friend from Russia, Catherine Devilliers, although even more spectacular were Robin Maugham's drunken adventures on Brighton seafront. I witnessed these scenes as I returned to Brighton to write a screenplay for Flora Robson who planned to star in a film for a company that bought rights in a Greek novel. Robin Maugham wanted to write a book about Morocco, but it was his long-suffering researcher, Derek Peel, who actually contacted me about sources in my own book on that country. Hermione Baddeley dominated the Brighton dinner table with her own adventures.

In 1932 Hermione went with her husband's Eton friend, Maurice Berkeley, the theatrical impresario to a cocktail party given by Elvira Barney. When Mrs Barney's husband left her and returned to New York, her rich parents set up Elvira and her lover Michael Stephen with a house in Williams Mews. Because of Elvira's wealth, Michael did little about his talents as a designer except to argue that he knew more about the subject than the then successful Princess Carlos de Rohan. At the cocktail party Hermione Baddeley and Maurice Berkeley spent most of their time on a large sofa trying to stop the hostess from quarrelling with young Michael. Later that night the lovers' dispute rose to a crescendo and stopped suddenly at the staccato sound of a gun. The newspapers had a field day with such headlines as **BANKER'S SON DEAD AFTER COCKTAIL PARTY: MAYFAIR BEAUTY IN SHOOTING DRAMA;** and **KNIGHT'S DAUGHTER ON MURDER CHARGE.**

To have been at the quarrelling lovers' cocktail party the night Elvira shot Michael dead had given Hermione and Maurice the best of dining-out stories because, of course, the question remained, did Elvira shoot Michael or did he shoot himself?

Only one person at Elvira's Old Bailey trial claimed to have seen Elvira with the pistol and there had been a 'puff of smoke' when it was fired through the window. Luckily for Elvira she had Sir Patrick Hastings to defend her and he asked the witness, 'I suppose you didn't know Mrs Barney's revolver contained cordite cartridges?' The witness replied 'No' to which Hastings

added, 'And I suppose you don't know that cordite cartridges don't make any smoke?' After a retirement of under two hours the jury returned to a tense courtroom with the verdict 'Not Guilty' and Elvira Barney walked out of the court free, with further headlines.

There were no headlines five years later when the rich rotter, the Hon David Pax Tennant, turned Hermione out on a pittance, refusing even to pay their children's school fees, while he lorded it with 13 servants at their former marital home. By 1944 when I arrived in London, Hermione had made her successful stage comeback with Hermione Gingold in the famous revue partnership that lightened the darkness of blitz-weary London. Some thought the two Hermiones went too far. After seeing them in his *Fallen Angels*, Noel Coward noted in his diary, 'I have never yet in my long experience seen a more vulgar, silly, unfunny, disgraceful performance...Gingold at moments showed that she could be funny. Baddeley was disgusting.'

I knew Hermione at her most 'disgusting' both on stage and in private, but in comparison with Coward's own tastes, I never thought her disgusting. Baddeley was one of the kindest people I have ever met and little wonder Bernard Shaw called her Hermione Goodeley. She showed great consideration for 'fallen angels' who went to prison while much bigger rogues whiled away life at the Gargoyle Club. Making a scapegoat of Ivor Novello on such a paltry charge over petrol rationing led Hermione Baddeley to start her *Coming Out Parties*.

Lady Juliet Duff championed Ivor Novello's case and she took the last snapshot of the composer the day before his death in 1951. A survivor from all those people is Lady Juliet's former daughter-in-law, Joan, who remained friends with her husband, Sir Michael and his mother in spite of annoyance at his absences from their famous home, Vaynol Park in Wales, while he amused society in his Queen Mary-look-alike drag. We all referred to her as 'St Joan' and when I went abroad for my travel books Hermione knew that St Joan would visit our unfortunate friends in prison.

An early *Coming Out Party* was given for Rupert Croft-Cooke who went to prison for allegedly picking up sailors and in *The Verdict of You All* the author tells how Hermione gave a party on his release. When Anthony Blunt and his fellow-Russian spies went to drink with the Mountbattens and Tallulah Bankhead at the Gargoyle Club, his author friends also went to chat up publishers such as the Hon George Kinnaid, who lived for many years with a hirsute Moroccan boyfriend known as 'The Gorilla.' Indeed, so devoted were Hermione and St Joan to Kinnaid and The Gorilla that they spent many summers with them at 3 Burlington Street in Brighton. We certainly did not share Croft-Cooke's 'source of mirth' when the 'two friends were perpetually getting one another into the local house of restraint, then pleading for the

offender's release to smash up more furniture,' since it was often St Joan and her cousin Peter Churchill, who spoke Arabic, who went with me to try and extricate The Gorilla from Lewes Prison.

Daphne Fielding points out in her biography of Rosa Lewis that George Kinnaid featured as importantly at the Cavendish Hotel as his friend Evan Tredegar. She writes, 'On one of her visits Lady Kinnaid gave a luncheon-party for the Queen of Romania. Rosa had known George's grandmother, an excessively evangelical lady, a leader of the Y.W.C.A. and a governor of the Lock Hospital for fallen women. "She gave me fourteen Bibles, I haven't got a bloody one now," Rosa used to say.'

Mrs Wills of Lanson House and Lady Kinnaid of Rossie Priory had more in common than the distribution of Bibles, for at an early age both their sons fell under the influence of Evan Tredegar's sado-masochism. Fortunately, Lady Kinnaid had a son-in-law to carry on the evangelical work, for he was an archbishop. Hermione and St Joan rented George's house in Brighton during the months he spent at The Gorilla's home town of Tangier, where Rupert Croft-Cooke witnessed the fighting between the lovers. They inflicted such wounds on one another that Hermione never knew whether George or The Gorilla, or possibly both, would die in the combat which formed an essential part of their affair.

On Hermione's last night at 3 Burlington Street in 1972 she gave an elaborate dinner party which we were all enjoying when a taxi stopped outside, depositing George and The Gorilla, a day too early. They had brought special food from Morocco for the archbishop's forthcoming visit and there was more than enough for us to sample, which George insisted we did between the courses prepared by St Joan and the housekeeper. What we could not eat would be welcomed by the hordes of mice in the kitchen.

As a coming-out present from The Gorilla's most recent imprisonment in Tangier, George had bought him a gorgeous costume, consisting mostly of golden tassels that glistened against the thick black hair when he did his belly-dance better than any girl, his huge bulk notwithstanding. April Ashley wrote, 'Joan was a tremendous cook and hostess. She affected eccentric corsages. A plastic rhododendron might be affixed to her generous bosom, or a stuffed cockatoo.' George's kitchen was too small for The Gorilla to clean the silver and for St Joan to continue with the help of Mrs Lewis the housekeeper, cooking our dinner, so he went upstairs to do the job.

George then called up to him, 'You have forgotten the Goddard's Powder, dear,' and immediately, in parrot mimicry, The Gorilla's voice came from above, 'You have forgotten the Goddard's Powder, dear.' A fight there and then was narrowly averted because the doorbell rang as Peter Churchill arrived in time for brandy. George called up to The Gorilla, 'There's lovely

Peter come to cheer us all up. Go and open the door.' The Gorilla repeated this, and then in his usual voice he shouted at George, 'Go open door yourself, you cock-sucking old queen.'

This was the signal for the fight to start, but first we had a hail of crested knives and forks coming down the stairs. Fortunately Peter Churchill's fluent Arabic managed to soothe The Gorilla. Such a typical slice of life as lived at 3 Burlington Street had not infrequently to be explained in court. Daphne Fielding described George Kinnaird as 'a whimsical eccentric' and one of Rosa Lewis's 'pets' whose life-style must not be reported 'to any of those dratted small-beer newspaper scribblers. We can't have them putting in a lot of lies about the goings-on here for her ladyship to read,' quoting Rosa.

When King Edward VII stayed at 14 Chichester Terrace with his daughter he went around the corner to dine at Sir Edward Sassoon's house, notable for its glass-domed mausoleum in the style of the Royal Pavilion. Already a rich banker, Sir Edward married the daughter of the equally rich Baron de Rothschild. Their unmarried son, Sir Philip inherited the house in 1912 and removed family bodies from the mausoleum for he knew his fellow-Etonians Evan Tredegar and Peter Churchill liked to use it for the black mass. The Sassoons eventually left Brighton but one of their Cohen friends remained there and in 1963 *The Times* said of Col Charles Waley Cohen, 'the third son of Nathaniel Louis Cohen, a member of one of the oldest and most prominent Jewish families in England. His mother was a daughter of Professor Jacob Waley, a jurist of repute in the mid-nineteenth century.'

Charlie Waley Cohen was called to the Bar by the Inner Temple in 1903 and became a High Court judge at Karachi in 1910. I knew him initially through his work with Adeline de la Feld's Deptford Institute which dealt with the plight of Jewish refugees. During 1957 I lived on Brighton seafront writing my book *Gateway To The Khyber*, while Peter Churchill worked on his memoirs in 14 Chichester Terrace. By then the Sassoon mausoleum had become a pub, popular with the blind men whose coach stopped there going back to the St Dunstan's Home at Ovingdean. So it was in one of England's most striking burial chambers that Peter Churchill and I used to entertain our blind friends as well as getting Charlie Waley Cohen to cast his legal eye on our writing about mutual friends.

Our final adviser on Brighton's sado-masochistic scene was that energetic exponent of it, George Kinnaird, the publisher at John Murray. Far from taking a libel action over Nina Hamnett's description of Evan Tredegar in her *Laughing Torso*, Evan celebrated its publication. And likewise, George Kinnaird took no exception to Daphne Fielding calling him 'a whimsical eccentric' in her biography of Rosa Lewis, for the author acknowledges George's help in writing the book. And Rosa herself need not

have bothered to protect George from 'those dratted small-beer newspaper scribblers' since the frequent and violent rows both by George and Sarah Churchill ended up in court and so in the press.

An author George consorted with outside his publishing work was John Betjeman because of the poet's friendship with the Rev Colin Gill. In his 1960 verse autobiography *Summoned by Bells*, published by John Murray, Betjeman wrote at length about the Oxford academic 'George Alfred Kolkhorst, you whom nothing shocked,' not even the 'rhyming folklore' by Colin Gill which Betjeman quoted, 'G'uggery G'uggery Nunc, / your room is all cluttered with junk; / Candles, bamboonery, / Plush and Saloonery - / Please pack it up in a trunk.'

Much of Father Gill's ministry had been in Brighton's High Churches, though Betjeman noted that he was 'Now Rector of St Magnus-the-Martyr, City of London.' But Colin Gill still kept a home in Brighton and tried to ensure that George Kinnaird and The Gorilla did not murder each other, which almost happened, sending the Moroccan back to Lewes Prison. Hermione Baddeley decided the Coming-Out Party should be held at the Sassoon mausoleum as the lower part, which formerly held the bodies, had been converted into a large bar excellent for The Gorilla to spellbind the customers with his belly-dance that had delighted the crowded market-squares of his native Morocco.

Inevitably, a beating-up took place from which the now-elderly George Kinnaird did not recover and an alert Flora Robson just managed to grab a sorrowful but also very drunk Father Gill from toppling into the grave as he conducted the service. But life as lived at 3 Burlington Street, Brighton, lived on in the law courts. John Betjeman was *Private Eye's* first 'Piloti' and he expressed outrage at the proposal to demolish the splendid London church of Holy Trinity in Sloane Street, and put an office block on the prestigious site, incorporating a small church for present day needs. I wrote supporting Betjeman and the church authorities sued neither him nor me, but later my letters on the matter were laid before the High Court by Eric Kemp, Bishop of Chichester. And the press cited my correspondence with Bishop Kemp, a friend of Betjeman who would be amongst the famous attending the poet's memorial service in Westminster Abbey.

In his autobiography John Betjeman thanked his fellow High Churchman Tom Driberg 'for going through the manuscript and proofs and making valuable suggestions which have always been adopted.' In 1951 Driberg married Mrs Ena Binfield with a flurry of publicity in church and later at the Commons. He booked two separate rooms for the honeymoon which his wife, to his great annoyance, changed to a double. It started their many years of quarrelling because Tom simply disliked touching the clever and

attractive Ena. Like some of his still-living Bloomsbury friends, he had a horror of used sanitary towels and became extremely angry if any of his 'rough trade' pick-ups took 'jam rags' to sniff in the public lavatories which Tom, the great High Churchman, frequented for his daily intake of semen.

Driberg's aversion to all things female struck me as odd because I grew up in Belfast with three females in the house, though I got a cultural shock on my first visit to Brighton when I saw a bathroom specially designed so that menstruating women could pass through running water. Since I was going to retrace both Gurdjieff's and Crowley's footsteps in the East in 1957 I naturally consulted the Karachi High Court judge, Col Waley Cohen, about women being 'unclean' during their 'periods.' 'But you must read the Zoroastrian scriptures on the matter,' and so I did on the ship to Karachi, and later quoted them in my book, since even a woman having a period could pollute 'dung-fuel and ashes when their limbs cast a shadow over them, and the salt and lime for washing her shift are to be treated just like stone.'

Many women, including Adeline de la Feld, found Aleister Crowley's form of the black mass more fascinating than the gay clergy version for men only with blood and semen in the communion chalice. The emphasis in ancient scriptures on women being unclean because of their natural bodily functions led Crowley to stress the importance of the menses and he used this liquid to blend the wheat and hashish for the communion bread. Driberg noted that Crowley 'could exercise a compelling fascination over women, particularly elderly women with a fair amount of money.'

Driberg knew John Betjeman's world well and in *Ruling Passions* mentions many of Bridget Parsons's friends other than Betjeman. Certainly Driberg could not overlook Jesus Chutney, the artist wife of Sir Percy Harris, one-time Liberal Chief Whip who was called 'The Housemaid' as his dreary manner of talking always emptied the House of Commons in record time. Aleister Crowley had given Lady Harris the name 'Jesus Chutney' and she designed the Tarot cards for Mary Oliver and Dil de Rohan to use.

Jesus Chutney supported Maundy Gregory's Anglo-Ukrainian Council and Lonsdale Bryans's anti-Hitler but pro-German schemes. During the 1930s Crowley worked for MI5 and for a time lived in Berlin with another spy, Gerald Hamilton who liked to introduce himself as 'You know I'm Mr Norris from Isherwood's book *Goodbye to Berlin*.' Hamilton's 80th birthday party took place at Hermione Baddeley's London flat though I enjoyed going to the Good Earth Chinese Restaurant in the King's Road above which Gerald lived with a weird collection of odds and ends that had played a part in his life of crime. Twice Winston Churchill was obliged to have Gerald arrested, once during the Second World War when Hamilton was about to cross the Irish Sea dressed as a nun.

Gerald Hamilton was the authority on corruption in high places and crossed swords with Brendan Bracken about the past in Evan Tredegar's international black mass set. As far as Churchill was concerned the greatest insult came when Graham Sutherland asked Gerald to sit for some of the body parts of the official House of Commons portrait of the wartime Prime Minister. If Gerald had much the same kind of thick body, Churchill's bulldog face certainly did not resemble Gerald's bloodhound eyes and drapes of excessive discoloured skin around a hideous mouth. Little wonder Churchill hated the picture and his wife had it destroyed. On hearing that my lodger, Eric Ewens, had dramatised the Christopher Isherwood novel, Gerald came to my front door the next morning before Eric or I were up, demanding a part of the fee for the broadcast, which the BBC eventually paid.

Adeline de la Feld did not like her niece Bridget Parsons and her brother Desmond sitting for their portraits to Jesus Chutney because Raoul Loveday, an Oxford undergraduate friend of Evan Tredegar, had died mysteriously at Crowley's temple in Sicily. His wife, Betty Loveday, said in a book *Tiger Woman* that her husband died from physical and mental revulsion at the pre-dawn ceremonies when cats were offered up as sacrifices.

Aleister Crowley, like Gurdjieff, claimed to have got his 'higher learning' from priests in China and nothing could stop Desmond Parsons, and Francis Rose, also going to China. The involvement of Anglican priests and notable laity in the black mass proved useful to my case in the High Court. I could, for example, quote the supposedly-great churchman, Tom Driberg, enthusing over Aleister Crowley's funeral, 'He was given a proper occultist's send-off at the municipal crematorium in Brighton; the service included the recital of his *Hymn to Pan*; the town council passed a resolution deploring the whole thing and saying that it must never happen again.'

Brighton's town council, however, could not stop the gay clergy from saying the black mass in Ovingdean church as earlier they had celebrated the same kind of mass when Maurice Bowra was elected Warden of Wadham College. Bishop Kemp had been an Oxford College chaplain for many years and he did not like me writing about the black mass at Oxford over which no action was taken in the ecclesiastical or civil courts. High Churches associated with Adeline de la Feld's family often became the setting for black masses and it was at Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, that her mother collapsed after unwittingly intruding on gay rites taking place there. But both those High Church founders, Alexander Beresford-Hope and his brother-in-law, Lord Salisbury, knew perfectly well about the homosexual scandals within the Hope family.

Lord Hugh Cecil, known affectionately as 'Linky', became secretary to his father, Lord Salisbury the Victorian Prime Minister, and spent his long life as a bachelor making mischief in and out of the House of Commons often with

the help of his friend Winston Churchill who married in 1908 with Linky as best man. On becoming Provost of Eton in 1936, Linky had to curb the visitations of Evan Tredegar, but in 1951 Linky could not persuade Evan's old protege Brendan Bracken, to continue as MP for Bournemouth. Linky knew the highways and byways of politics better than most, just as he understood that sex problems beset more than Professor William Gruffydd and myself. Linky relished scandals to the extent of writing to the Archbishop of Canterbury that 'Controversy, particularly acrimonious controversy, is the privilege of a civilized life.'

After the splendours of Hatfield House and the excitement of being Eton's Provost, Linky in retirement settled in a miserable house in Bournemouth but often went up to London to play bridge in the Junior Carlton Club with his young friend Teddy Birley of the Foreign office. The pair had loved to gossip about **The House On The Sand** and my predicament as presented in the play and my fear of Billy Gruffydd making me rush off to Canada to start a new life. But the revolver smoke on the stage at the Q Theatre only reminded Hermione Baddeley of Elvira Barney shooting her lover dead, and ironically the stage policeman, Dickie Littledale, was the first of our many friends who committed suicide.

Hermione had given Coming Out Parties for Rupert Croft-Cooke and his rival George Kinnaird, and she would go with me to courts when events more controversial than Elvira Barney's gun occurred, such as suicide verdicts returned in coroners' courts when we had evidence of murder.

Lord Annan, the former Provost of King's College, knew brilliant young Etonians such as Guy Burgess who went up to Cambridge, in the same way as Lord Hugh Cecil knew bright Etonians such as Edward Marjoribanks who became President of the Oxford Union in 1922. Marjoribanks's step-brother, the present Lord Hailsham, has written, 'My dear brother Edward committed suicide, and there is a sense in which I have never recovered from the blow. He killed himself one spring day in our house in Sussex with my 20-bore shotgun which, when I had been a little younger, had been my most prized possession.' One of the first people to be notified of the shooting was Lord Tweedmouth, for the much loved Eddie was heir to his title and estate, since his daughter, the Hon Joan Marjoribanks, whom we called St Joan, could not succeed. Sixty years after that spring day tragedy Joan is still moved when Eddie's name is mentioned.

Noel Annan has written, 'the very influences at Cambridge, said to have corrupted the nation's youth, created one intelligence agency at Bletchley Park which was the most successful of any during the war. These were the cryptographers deciphering Ultra. The station was largely staffed in the early years from Cambridge and one at least of its brilliant innovators was a

homosexual...' Alas, Alan Turing never lived to hear himself so described, for when his homosexual adventures came before the law courts in 1954 he was found dead. A convenient explanation was suicide but Anthony Blunt and I did not believe this.

Three years later a cocktail party was arranged in London for Prince Danylo Skoropadsky before his marriage to Halina Melnyk-Kaluzynska. After the party a neighbour, Mrs Dorothy Thomas, heard quarrelling in Danylo's flat, and Professor Nicholas Skripnik incorporated her account of it in his biography of Danylo which also included medical reports from Hampstead's New End Hospital where Danylo was admitted. One report states, 'This is to certify that the above-named patient was admitted to this hospital on 23rd February, 1957 at 12.05 a.m. and died on the same date at 7.05 a.m. No Post Mortem was performed.' It was obvious that Danylo, that once vital link between East and West, had been poisoned, yet neither post mortem nor inquest followed. A leading firm of solicitors was consulted to inquire of the government why. But although the lawyers accepted the case, a week later they wrote saying the case was too political for them to continue.

Twice a month I left Brighton to spend the weekend with Ruth Armitage at Strand-on-the-Green overlooking the Thames at Chiswick, and there too would often be her friend from the 1930s, Sue Miers the historian and her children. It had been thought that Ruth's brother Edward, would marry Sue but she became Mrs Richard Miers instead, wife of the South Wales Borderers' Colonel. Edward Armitage, a Cambridge-educated architect, lived in one of the houses he designed in the grounds of his mother's house, the historic Strand-on-the-Green-House, while a number of other 1930s Cambridge graduates lived nearby whom I met at Saturday boating events or garden parties given for charities in the garden.

Although their studio was down-river at Durham Wharf in Hammersmith Terrace, the painters Julian Trevelyan and his wife, Mary Fedden, belonged to the Armitage group. A party took place at Julian's house on 18 January 1938 for Auden and Isherwood before they went to China to write a book. E M Forster went to the party to show off his policeman boyfriend, Bob Buckingham, while Benjamin Britten turned up with a singer, Hedli Anderson, who later married Louis MacNeice. Hedli had featured much in Britten's music and at the party sang some cabaret songs Britten had recently composed to words by Auden. Brian Howard arrived with his latest pick-up and when Trevelyan dared to make a remark, Howard started screaming about, 'I refuse to allow my friend to be insulted by the Worst Painter in London.' Insults and cheap wine always enlivened that sort of get-together.

Morgan Forster had a flat in Chiswick and when he died in 1970 his

ashes were sprinkled in Bob Buckingham's garden and some of his furniture went to the Ealing home of Buckingham's nephew Jim, where I had lived for some years surrounded by figures from the past. My first visitors to Ealing, appropriately enough, were Liam Hanley and his wife Hilary, now parents of grown-up children. But we always talked of his father, James Hanley, and the new edition of *Boy*, in the defence of which A P Herbert, J B Priestley and H G Wells had fought so valiantly as witnesses at the successful 1930s prosecution of the book. Although E M Forster had not taken the witness stand, the legal proceedings outraged him and over the years I conveyed messages from him to James Hanley, usually about Britten's projected opera based on Hanley's *Welsh Sonata*.

His friendship with Forrest Reid formed my initial interest in Forster but subsequently 'Poor Richard' provided our great bond after *The Protege* came out with my account of life at the Mayflower Gospel Caravan in Wales during the war. Although Evan Tredegar was 'a square-rig fancier' which implied he had more than an eye for a sailor, he had served in the Welsh Guards during the First World War and had association with other local regiments because of his social status and relationship with the regiments' officers. In the same week in 1944 that I first met Evan, Richard Miers of the South Wales Borderers was promoted to Lt Colonel of the regiment to the surprise of some.

There had been much public controversy about homosexual events around Abergavenny where Hess was a prisoner. I first heard this from the army deserter in Baille Glas churchyard who went on the run rather than commit suicide like some of his boyfriends did. E M Forster helped Joe Ackerley to draft a letter to *The Spectator* about this 'witch hunt' of the gay community, but Forster depended on James Hanley, then living in Wales, for precise details. Dennis Parry on the other gospel caravan had not exactly been discreet in his public speaking on the 'Sodom and Gomorrah' background of Lord Tredegar's grand friends, though he never went as far as his friend, Ian Paisley, did later with the Save Ulster From Sodomy campaign. Nobody had tried to sodomise Dennis or me but we were astonished by the manly soldiers who wanted to be buggered. Years later my doctor friends at Ealing had to operate on one of these senior army officers who had carried his high heels and drag into battle for wearing in secret, but afterwards wanted surgery so as to spend his retirement openly as a woman.

In 1959 Brigadier Richard Miers wrote his autobiography *Shoot to Kill*, an account of his Welsh regiment's operation against Communists in Malaya. Soon afterwards he shot himself which did not surprise me in view of the wartime scandal and no Evan Tredegar around to cover up. E M Forster and Joe Ackerley had made field trips as authors to India and loved the East

and working-class Easterners, but not so poor Richard Miers who used some nasty terms to describe the physical appearance of the young Communist soldiers shot in cold blood.

Ruth Armitage and her fellow-doctors at King Edward's Hospital were keen opera-goers and when we all went to Glyndebourne they would first pick me up in Brighton. But I also enjoyed Glyndebourne's former stage director, Patrick McClellan when he came to talk about his 1970s work at Sadlers Wells or when Carrie Tubb delighted the Strand-on-the-Green neighbours by describing her role of Elektra at Covent Garden in 1910. We relished famous quarrels in and out of opera houses, especially those between the Ulster-born conductor of the Halle Orchestra, Sir Hamilton Harty, and his wife Agnes Nicholls who made her operatic debut in 1895 as Dido in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*.

In 1978 I reviewed a biography of Hamilton Harty in the *Irish Press*, 'We see Harty's career as accompanist, conductor and composer. We see him as a wit (British opera is dying of T.B. i.e. of Thomas Beecham). We see him as a homesick Irishman deeply imbued with the Celtic past. We see his courage in fighting illness. But ultimately we see him as an enigma...The famous quarrels had become legends by the time the widowed Agnes Nicholls gave her lectures at the Institute of Recorded Sound. Some of the bitterest disputes included Herbert Langley, the first to sing Gianni Schicchi in English. "That's the first time I ever heard that woman speak the truth," he growled when Agnes Nicholls remarked that Langley disliked her. Yet despite such gross insults, 30 years later when Patrick McClellan and I organised help for the still-volatile but crippled Langley, Lady Harty responded immediately with Langley's recording of *La Fille De Madame Angot*, by then a sought-after collector's piece. But if the furious fights are not recorded here neither are the happy holidays, and the private performances Hamilton Harty and his wife gave at Mourne Grange, and although Patrick Carey had died before this book was researched, was there not another Ulster home of music at Blessingbourne which Harty enjoyed as much as Vaughan Williams did? Peter Montgomery of Blessingbourne, as an instrumentalist and conductor, as well as a friend, held a more interesting correspondence with Harty than any of the letters cited in the book which are mostly "thank you" notes put in simply because they came from people such as Delius, Sibelius, Elgar and Walton.'

On 9 September 1963 Peter Montgomery wrote me a 10-page letter about Harty, 'I should have shown you his letters including this one written after he had looked at some songs of mine, "I have had a look at the songs. They show poetical ideas badly expressed. This comes from a lack of technique and it depends on you yourself whether you improve this side. But

keep away from St Cecilia - she is an ungrateful bitch at the best of times and takes all a man's devotion and then laughs at him!"

Patrick Carey had been at Shrewsbury School with Patrick McClellan and George Kinnaird, while Henry Lynch-Robinson and others in this book had been to the prep school Carey's father started at Mourne Grange so beloved by Sir Hamilton and Lady Harty. But if the young Patrick Carey was enthralled by Agnes Nicholls singing Sieglinde, a young Irish Guardsman, John Gaskin, was equally delighted with the cultured tones of Patrick Carey and his mastery of the Classics, not that John ever pretended to scholarship, though I objected strongly to his representation as an 'attractive but coarse ex-soldier' in *Conspiracy of Silence*, the biography of Anthony Blunt.

One of that book's authors, Barrie Penrose, met Patrick McClellan at my home in 1980 and heard how Patrick's father had raised the Manx Regiment during the Second World War which delighted his friend Earl Granville the Manx governor and uncle of the present Queen, more than did the near-collision between a factory chimney and the light aircraft Lord Granville was flying in with Col McClellan over Liverpool on their way to inspect troops. Surviving that, Granville went on to Government House in Northern Ireland which gratified Anthony Blunt whose cousin was Lady Granville, sister of the Queen Mother.

John Gaskin was one of the best looking Irish Guardsmen who left Belfast for France with the British Expeditionary Force to spend 5 years as a POW dreaming of being free again when he would shed khaki for ever and dress like the great Lord Tredegar and roam the world. As a cicerone, John spent time in Italy and Greece often in company with his old friend Patrick Carey and he 'cut a figure' in gay society and soon became established as Anthony Blunt's live-in partner, not displeased to be known as 'Lady John.' He certainly was a charming host when Peter Montgomery stayed at least four times a year in the director's flat at the Courtauld when I went to collect Peter for our musical activities.

I could understand those who thought that John 'tended to sulk in company feeling that Anthony's grand friends deliberately excluded him from conversation.' But when Blunt was away at Richmond with his mother or at Covent Garden with the Queen Mother, then John could relax and act as host to his own friends from Ireland such as Henry Lynch-Robinson, Peter Montgomery, Patrick Carey, Sidney Smith and others who had known the handsome Irish Guardsman before the war. Because John had lived with these people in a world Blunt had not fully known, and they therefore had a stake in John's pre-Blunt past, Blunt resented this, nor did Blunt take kindly to the fact that some of John's Irish friends, such as Peter Montgomery and me, knew about Blunt's spying activities. After Anthony's exposure in 1979, Peter

told the *Sunday Times* how Peter lived in constant fear, 'that it was all going to come out and then I would get the chop.'

That constant fear led Peter to relish the second part of his London visits with his other Cambridge friend, Hugh Benham, who lived in Hyde Park Street, just a short distance from St John's Vicarage where Anthony Blunt spent his boyhood. Opposite Hugh's flat lived another Cambridge friend, Lord Stamp, who like Blunt was a professor at London University. But whereas the married Trevor Stamp taught bacteriology and led the Liberal Party for a time, the unmarried Blunt taught art history and led a double life. I too liked it when Peter crossed the Edgware Road from the Courtauld to spend a couple of weeks with the merry Hugh Benham who at night shed his daytime mien appropriate as a Church Commissioner lawyer and became a charming host to his many artistic friends. Musicians formed the majority of these and today Trevor Stamp's son, Richard, conducts the Academy of London and engages some of my friends.

Then late one night an irate Anthony Blunt phoned and asked if I had heard what had happened to Patrick Carey who according to Blunt had got himself into a situation similar to that of Alan Turing, but instead of dying like Alan, had survived his fall from an upper window in Belfast though with terrible injuries. Being an extremely sensitive soul, John Gaskin organised a visiting rota for our friends to visit the stricken Patrick in hospital where many of them read aloud to him my travel books which recounted journeys with other friends such as Peter Montgomery and Patrick McClellan. A slow recovery led at last to a convalescence in Crete with John Gaskin where they went up into the White Mountains and to the Minoan sites in cars driven by George Balcombe's colleagues from the British School of Archaeology where George was the Athens Bursar.

So John Gaskin found himself back where he had tried his hand as a cicerone twenty years before and I would get progress letters from George Giannarapis, my own cicerone during Cretan journeys for the first edition of my book about the island. In 1969 I too was back there doing a revised German edition of the book.

Although poor Patrick Carey moved on sticks with difficulty his brilliant conversation remained unimpaired. From his fund of stories about the 1920s schoolfriend, George Kinnaird, he told of Rosa Lewis going to help hang curtains at George's family home in St James's Square where the born-again Lady Kinnaird made Rosa kneel down for prayers first. Rosa recalled, 'It didn't do me any harm and pleased her Ladyship although a wee bit awkward, kneeling with a bottle of the hard stuff inside my drawers for her two waiting sons.'

While getting about Crete on his sticks, Patrick Carey was as abstemious

as Lady Kinnaid, and blamed over-drinking after an emotional crisis in Belfast as the reason for throwing himself out of the window. He certainly did not mention the person whom others felt sure had pushed him and who figured in the emotional crisis. A bus brought me back to Chania one evening and I joined Patrick at one of the waterside tables set out by the tavernas ringing Chania's Venetian harbour. As we ate he showed me copious notes he had made from my earlier Crete book. Reading of Dil de Rohan in the book reminded Patrick that he had recently spent some time with Donald Darling who was writing his spy memoirs and wanted more information about Dil de Rohan whom Donald had met many times at my various homes. I promised to look out Dil's letters when I got back to London and take them around to Donald at the Charing Cross pub where he lived.

First, however, Patrick Carey's finances had to be arranged. He was not short of money but British currency restrictions would soon force him back to unhappy scenes in Belfast. Since I had an 'External Account' from my years in Canada, I was able to let Patrick have some dollars in exchange for his sterling.

In 1965 T S Eliot died and I left for Canada again, first stowing my pictures, papers and books and some furniture in spare spaces at Fabers in Russell Square where they were taken in the station wagon of Richard de la Mare, co-founder and chairman of Fabers. For some year after Eliot's death his secretary, Miss Mildred Drage, stayed on at Fabers since she knew how to handle the late poet's vast collection of papers. Presiding over my various homes had been a large 17th century Madonna-and-Child, carved out of jacaranda in a flurry of airborne Baroque drapery. Miss Drage had no doubt that the place of honour for the flamboyant sculpture was on the very top floor of Fabers where she worked on Eliot's papers.

As well as Eliot's office and that of Charles Monteith and their secretaries, this top floor housed the elderly lady called Mrs Hatt in small but important quarters. She was one of those wise old souls who keep publishers on the right side of the law even more than libel lawyers do. Whereas Charles Monteith and Morley Kennerley wrote me letters of introduction to various government officials in Morocco, Mrs Hatt provided me with letters to her friends there whose books she had earlier edited. One of these had written a biography of a former, homosexual King of Morocco and Mrs Hatt had hurriedly to change the opening paragraph,

'I first beheld His Majesty reclining over a large pouffe.'

The clever Mrs Hatt found Miss Drage's father, Commander Drage, as interesting as T S Eliot and I did. Charles Drage was an author who had worked for the British Council and knew a great deal about such people as Aleister Crowley and Evan Tredegar, but was equally acquainted with affairs

at Selwyn House, and when Anthony Blunt got Dil de Rohan out of the country for the last time, Dil appointed Commander Drage as her literary agent since he knew her Ministry of Information background.

In 1969 I went to Fabers to collect Dil's letters from my writing desk. First I telephoned Mildred Drage to ask if there were any new letters or press cuttings for me which she usually dealt with. Knowing her father's connection with Dil, I mentioned that there was 'hot stuff,' meaning Dil's old letters about who got famous paintings which Donald Darling felt sure had been stolen from Spanish churches and castles during the Civil War. This caused Blunt and his fellow art historians extreme embarrassment, as indeed Blunt's interference in my Faber affairs caused me.

I had introduced Blunt to Berthold Wolpe, head of Fabers' art department, at my home in 1964 because Blunt and I were handling publicity for a book about Goya by our recently killed friend Tomas Harris. I took the task on because I wanted to spare Tomas's sister, Enriqueta Harris, whom I saw most days as we both tried to cope with Dil and write our own books. When Blunt's mischief-making got out of hand, Mildred Drage was obliged to swear a High Court affidavit in which she aptly referred to my term 'hot stuff.'

In 1969 I was living at Strand-on-the-Green and one night Anthony Blunt called me on Ruth Armitage's telephone as he had done so often in 1965 when we were both involved in covering-up more than Dil de Rohan's stolen pictures. Over the years I had got used to Blunt's bad temper over domestic trivia. For example, John Gaskin liked to prepare finely-sliced salads which quickly dried up if Blunt spent too long over pre-dinner drinks. John's resultant annoyance would inflame Blunt's wrath. I thought the pair would inevitably split up until I realised they needed their fights just like Dil and Mary Oliver, though not on the same wavelength as George Kinnaid and The Gorilla. Blunt battered John with words but the harder I tried to stay neutral in their domestic wars the more involved I became, and no sooner was I back in London after Crete than I realised the dollars I had exchanged with Patrick Carey there had raised Blunt's resentment against me to a new level.

When I left Crete and George Giannarapis went home to Athens, Patrick felt lonely and took to heavy drinking again. He had not touched alcohol for a year and so his favourite ouzo soon led to violent indiscretions and he ended up in jail before being deported to Belfast where the scene of his suicide attempt and meeting with Peter Montgomery stirred up memories as disastrous as the further drinking orgy they inspired.

Blunt fumed at me as the cause of Patrick's latest catastrophe which according to Blunt included an attempt by Patrick to kill the person who had blackmailed him and caused him to jump from the window. So what were my

plans for cleaning up the mess? I told Blunt firmly that he could not blame me for Patrick's behaviour. Nevertheless if Blunt would wait a week I would pick Hugh Benham's legal brains when I met him with Peter Montgomery for an opera date. The lawyer might come up with some device for getting Patrick Carey away once more from the scene of his tragedy and where the sensitive Peter Montgomery was President of the Arts Council.

But again, I said the wrong thing to Blunt. He not only reacted with jealousy to Peter Montgomery's parties given at Hugh Benham's trans-Edgware Road home, but also felt that Peter and I were a threat through indiscreet divulgements of wartime secrets. Blunt had no visible signs of guilt about his spying, but as the threat of exposure grew so did his fear of what people might be giving away. I was a prime example

Gaskin must have enjoyed many passages in *Conspiracy of Silence* as much as I did, including reference to Blunt's 'grand friends' who deliberately excluded John from conversation, although John was often the centre of the grand friends' conversation. Before that book appeared Blunt and Gaskin had read my own account of Bridget Parsons's royal circle openly embarrassing the Courtauld set, and Blunt's boyhood friend Pud, who had since become Duke of Westminster, had good reason to remember Guardsman Gaskin.

John adored army officers with peerage connections and on his return to Belfast in 1945 set his sights higher than Headmaster Carey of Mourne Grange whose former pupils included aristocrats. John would be off to Rome with Lord This and to Athens with the Hon Major That before finally deciding on Mr Anthony Blunt, as he then was, because the Courtauld Institute happened to be near one of London's haunts where Guardsmen and sailors could be picked up to give or get a crack of the whip or longer-term bedroom service. John could do nothing when *Conspiracy of Silence* came out and he read what some of Blunt's friends stated about John's ability to procure other soldiers for hire.

But the spy-catchers did get the Irish dimension wrong. My book *Ulster* gave them the Blessingbourne connection, but not the fact that the Duke of Westminster had first met Blunt in 1921, and that John Gaskin and Henry Lynch-Robinson were two of the first people to view Skea Hall after the war when that other ex-soldier, Alan Price, was giving Viscount Cole fits as well as coping with his epilepsy. For years Bridget Parsons and I sought a wife for Michael Cole but he died a happy bachelor in 1956 aged 34.

Peter Montgomery and his brother Mgr Hugh went to stay with Michael Rosse at Birr Castle in Southern Ireland, but it was Michael's sister, Bridget Parsons, who called Blunt a Russian spy to his face. And of course Blunt blamed me for that too.

Michael Rosse derived great satisfaction in having Princess Margaret

as a step-daughter-in-law who stayed at Birr and his other stately homes but, in contrast, Bridget had indulged in a bitter dispute with the Snowdons. At the age of 87, their aunt, Adeline de la Feld, realised that she would never return from Canada to live in England and wished to dispense with her English estate in her lifetime, and so avoid the sort of litigation over it which had for so long plagued the Duke of Newcastle's family.

Adeline felt very aware that she was the last of the family to be deeply involved with that aspect of the High Church started by Alexander Beresford-Hope and his brother-in-law, Lord Salisbury, and then carried on to 1928 by Hope's great-nephew, the Duke of Newcastle who built the spectacular private chapel at Clumber where his niece Adeline married in 1920. But apart from such architectural splendours as Clumber Chapel and All Saints, Margaret Street, in poor districts of London other churches had been built for High Church rites and which Adeline financed from her portion of the Newcastle estate which because of currency control she could not transfer to Canada. As her executor inheriting her papers, I have the Church auditors' receipts for these sums as well as the Church Commissioners' correspondence about endowments.

The ecclesiastical lawyer most involved with Adeline's family affairs was Hugh Benham at whose house Peter Montgomery stayed when he left Blunt at the Courtauld. Like his old army friend, now the Duke of Westminster, John Gaskin had a great interest in jewellery and worked for years at Armour and Winston's in Piccadilly's Burlington Arcade. The duke and Blunt had known Adeline's jewels from the 1920s and that they belonged to a collection established in the days when the Courtauld Institute was the Duke of Newcastle's London home. As I would be away in Crete working on my book, I asked John to keep an eye on the jewel sale and Blunt to arouse interest in the sale of the paintings. But Blunt was not happy about the sale because he had assumed that the whole collection would be bequeathed intact to his friend, Michael Rosse, the step-father-in-law of Princess Margaret, Blunt's cousin.

Nevertheless, the sales went ahead and on my return from Greece, Albert Middlemiss, head of jewels at Christie's, wrote to me saying everything had exceeded its reserve price. His letter sent care of Faber and Faber stated, 'I am enclosing a copy of the result of the sale of jewellery belonging to your mother.'

Because Ernest Bryans had been so closely involved with Adeline's Uncle Newcastle and his finances, and since I played a similar role for the duke's niece, many people, including Adeline's Lloyd's Bank which acted as the executors of her English estate, spoke and wrote believing Adeline to be my mother. This would be very difficult to explain in the High Court when

Mr Brian Neill QC raised the sale of the jewels at Christie's.

But where were the proceeds? Fortunately I kept the Church Commissioners' letters. My address had been given as care of Fabers, and while I was there talking to Morley Kennerley in the hallway he asked how the Christie's sale had gone since he had been responsible for Barbara Hutton buying some Hope diamonds in the 1930s. At the word "Christie's", Fabers' company secretary, Mr Simmons, who happened to be passing, went and produced Christie's cheque which by mistake had been made out to the publishers. I asked him to return it to Christie's who then made out a cheque for the Church Commissioners as Adeline had intended.

But the Commissioners failed to use the money in the way Adeline had specified and this led to a long dispute. Adeline's niece, Bridget Parsons, telephoned Anthony Blunt who had recommended that the National Portrait Gallery buy Thomas Hope's portrait by Sir William Beechey, an artist represented in the Courtauld collection. Far from sorting things out Bridget only succeeded in infuriating the Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures.

At that time, Blunt was trying desperately to ingratiate himself with his cousin, the Queen Mother, whose daughter, Princess Margaret together with her husband, were on the receiving end of Bridget's vindictive attacks and who were in any case embarrassed by Bridget hitting the bottle and the headlines. Bridget then turned on Blunt and his friendship with Brian Howard who had been at Eton and Oxford with Bridget's brother. Her brother Michael, Lord Rosse, was the principal target of Bridget's fury, and she was not afraid to tell the art historian Blunt that she knew what he and Guy Burgess had been up to and who had advised Guy Burgess to flee to Russia. These were hardly propitious circumstances for Lady Parsons to reconcile her Aunt Adeline with the Church Commissioners.

Bridget's devoted friends James Lees-Milne and Harold Acton who had also been at Eton with Michael and Brian Howard, had already extolled her heyday in their books, but eventually they wrote to me about 'the strange trait of discontent derived from William Beckford' and 'Poor Bridget, she became impossible towards the end of her life and that, as you say, must have been largely owing to her illness.'

But Bridget was a young woman when she and her brother Michael were the envy of Lady Cunard's ballroom dancing Black Bottom. Was there any truth in Bridget's claim that Michael was the lowest kind of cad who even beat up his own female relations? She assured Aunt Adeline he did just that on hearing Bridget state that she was not going to marry Prince George, Duke of Kent. Michael, and many others, thought only a fool would turn down such a proposal of marriage, and from a man Bridget really loved until her dying day. Amongst the people I asked for opinions about Michael Rosse was

Auberon Waugh who wrote to me on 13 November 1979, 'My father never cared for Lord Rosse. He once saw him punch ... (a female relation) in the Gritti Palace Hotel in Venice.'

Blunt saw the sale of Adeline's jewels as a conspiracy by Bridget Parsons and me to stop his friend Michael Rosse from getting the family heirlooms. Some of Blunt's earliest publications had been on William Beckford's architecture and it did not please Beckford's descendant, Bridget Parsons, to be told that she was mentally ill simply because she had inherited Beckford's blood. Her attack on Blunt over Adeline's affairs, alarmed Blunt and he saw how easily she could rip off the cover hiding his treachery.

In 1944 James Lees-Milne had described Bridget as being 'a lioness on her off day' and on the eve of her step-nephew's wedding to Princess Margaret the police arrested her as though the lioness had indeed escaped from captivity. **The Times** carried the most restrained headline, **POLICEMAN LOCKED WOMAN IN EMBASSY: LADY BRIDGET PARSONS ON CAR CHARGE**. The police doctor certified 'that she was unfit to drive, said that she was very loquacious and inclined to be bombastic during his examination.'

Bridget rightly prophesied that Princess Margaret's marriage would end in divorce, but every year that it did last saw the amount of gin Bridget consumed grow. And the amount that Bridget had drunk while dining with Prime Minister Macmillan's nephew, the Duke of Devonshire, featured prominently in the trial which took place later. Blunt's old school friend John Betjeman was photographed accompanying her to the court which, however, she left more cheerful having won the case, much to the amazement of Anthony Blunt and me because we had seen Bridget very 'bombastic' after drinking and confronting anyone who dared to dispute her knowledge about Beckford's architecture or Thomas Hope's jewels.

After the sale of the Hope jewels at Christie's, Bridget's behaviour to Blunt became increasingly violent and bombastic by his suggestion that she should be treated for her Beckford illness, and thus save the royal family from further embarrassment. He, the ex-Russian spy but now 'all top hats and royalty' would then, of course, be safe from her himself.

It became more and more of a relief to me when Peter Montgomery left Blunt's flat at the Courtauld for Hugh Benham's in Hyde Park Street. Hugh was involved in the row between Adeline and his employers, the Church Commissioners. Blunt, ever ready to attack Hugh, now accused the lawyer of stirring up a hornets' nest, for Hugh had called Adeline 'a silly old woman' who had not made her intentions clear when telling the Commissioners how she wanted her bequest to be used. Adeline learnt that she was being attacked for being old and a woman and that was enough for her. She changed her will,

and did not leave the Church Commissioners another penny, not even after the Commissioners wrote 'We have now written to the Incumbent informing him of this increase in his income and requesting that your mother, Lady Beatrice Lister-Kaye, be remembered by prayer annually at the Choral Eucharist on Trinity Sunday.'

I felt sorry for Peter Montgomery who came out of all this very badly. He had long and happy memories of Bridget when they were both young in Ireland and Aunt Adeline was the chatelaine of Birr Castle while her sister, Bridget's mother, went off to another country seat in England, with a new husband. Peter was still going to Birr Castle 50 years later and trying to shield Blunt from Bridget's bitter attacks about wartime spying and about the blackmailer who put Patrick Carey into competition with Bridget over the consumption of alcohol and the blurting out of unwelcome truths which that alcohol engendered.

Although Sadlers Wells Opera moved to the Coliseum, Peter Montgomery, Hugh Benham and I still went to the old Islington theatre to hear the Handel Opera Society which engaged Patrick McClellan on three productions which he did between work with the Grand Opera Society of Northern Ireland sponsored by Peter's Arts Council. Not that Hugh went often as he came to a sudden end. For a number of years he had been going on holiday to Morocco where he stayed at an hotel described in my book on that country and initially recommended to us both by Dil de Rohan who had known it from the 1930s. I wrote to Dil's old friend from the 1940s, Anna Pollak the opera singer who delighted so many people over so many years at Sadlers Wells. She replied on 1 November 1989, 'Hugh Benham: Oh I remember him well & liked him so much. I had a meal with him shortly after Erica's death &, strangely, in 1970 I went to Essouira with Patience Collier & stayed at the hotel Hugh always frequented & was shown the balcony from which he fell to his death. The management hinted that he may have been pushed.'

More than the hotel management in Morocco had reason to question Hugh's death, and Peter Montgomery's life was never the same again. Hugh's untimely end certainly did not surprise George Kinnaird and The Gorilla and both thought that judged by Moroccan custom he deserved to die. Hugh and Anna Pollak's companion, Erica Marx, numbered among the rich friends who gave financial backing to a Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge, who opened a fashionable restaurant which gave employment to his young boyfriend. When money went missing from the till, it was Hugh Benham, the Church Commissioners' solicitor, who demanded his pound of flesh and got it by sending the Fellow's young lover to prison. But it was stolen pictures as well as stolen money which connected Anthony Blunt and me to Morocco.

Blunt's brother Wilfrid's autobiography *Married To A Single Life* appeared in 1983 illustrated with family portraits by John Byam Shaw. The author noted that his Aunt Mabel, 'discovered, appropriated and patronised the artist Byam Shaw' many of whose pupils had painted the pictures crowding my rooms where the spy-catchers interviewed me. Robert and Peter Greenham returned to the Byam Shaw School of Art to teach and by 1963 Peter had become Keeper of the Royal Academy Schools and the Welsh Guards had commissioned him to do a portrait of the Queen. Guy Burgess had recently died in Moscow and during luncheon at Buckingham Palace the Queen Mother said to Greenham, 'the one thing I cannot stand is a traitor.'

Greenham told me the story as we travelled to stay with Peter Montgomery at Blessingbourne where Bishop Alan Buchanan was to sit for the portraitist. Eventually I had to take Greenham to the Courtauld for him to repeat the story to an anxious Blunt, and again later Greenham told it to Barrie Penrose during the author's research for the Blunt biography. The story had grown in importance because *Private Eye* obtained one of my letters to Peter Montgomery telling what happened at the Courtauld, and the satirical magazine used that letter in its exposure of Blunt.

Penrose wrote to Blunt's life-long friend and colleague, Jim Byam Shaw, the artist's son, who replied, 'I am afraid that I am not prepared to talk about Anthony.' Nor would Enriqueta Harris see Penrose and gave me her reasons while we walked our dogs and talked of the spy-catchers' latest letters and phone calls. It was the haughty Countess Frederika Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee who had told me in Hampstead Cemetery that Mary Pilgrim's 'real name was Doris Pillitz. A Jewess.' Dil de Rohan knew that the rich Pillitz family were as Jewish as their Harris neighbours in Hampstead, and it was Blunt's disclosure of Dil's virulent anti-Semitism that led his boss, London University, to expel Dil from the university-owned flat which she illegally and exorbitantly sub-let to Blunt's students while she played the princess in Spain near to the scene of Tomas Harris's death in suspicious circumstances.

The 1920s and 30s saw many exhibitions of Hedi Pillitz's portraits of theatre personalities, some of whom worked for Glen Byam Shaw, John's other son, who became a theatre director and married Angela Baddeley, Hermione's sister. Glen loved to tell how he went into Hedi Pillitz's studio as a small boy to watch people such as Sybil and Eileen Thorndike being painted. Peter Churchill went to Pillitz's exhibitions as the *New Statesman* critic and he got her to paint the dramatic portrait of Tamara Jossava which caused a stir at the Royal Academy Exhibition in 1924.

Peter Churchill with the sisters Angela and Hermione and Glen Byam Shaw used to join me in searching for presents in the Brighton antiques shops, where a strange man called Gypsy Lee used to keep items of interest for us.

One day he produced a portrait by Pillitz of a young Arab called Ali, but known as Ali Baba and his Forty Thieves. He and Peter Churchill had an affair in Tangier and for a time did odd jobs around Peter's restaurant there. In **All My Sins Remembered** Peter wrote of meeting Joan Black from Belfast in Paris, 'some of Joan's possessive friends had tried to break up our happiness, and even friends of mine had joined in the compulsive drive to separate us.' Most people thought it wrong for such a well-known gay as Peter Churchill to marry Joan who had enough money to match her title of Viscountess Churchill.

These matters only concerned a small group of people in Paris, in contrast to the flamboyant behaviour of Ali Baba's other titled gay friend, the 23rd Baron Audley, who had even less money than Peter when Sarah Churchill, Winston's daughter, became Lady Audley in 1962 and spent her honeymoon in the bed at George Kinnaird's previously occupied by Lord Audley and Ali. Because The Gorilla had become aggressively jealous of Ali we assumed he had sold the Pillitz portrait of Ali to Gypsy Lee. Certainly it never featured in the pictures and furniture damaged in the fights between George Kinnaird and The Gorilla which ended in jail sentences, or Sarah Churchill's equally fierce onslaughts against the Sussex Police which I had to explain to Mr Justice Lawson.

Both Peter Churchill and George Kinnaird recognised the Pillitz sitter from Barbara Hutton's early patronising days at the Sidi Hosni Palace in Tangier when her cousin, Jimmy Donahue, was cultivating Ali and his Forty Thieves. Hermione bought the picture for George Balcombe as we were going to celebrate his birthday at his Rottingdean home.

Rottingdean had been the stage dominated for decades by Enid Bagnold, who lived in what she termed 'this drunken palace' by the village green and who wanted Glen Byam Shaw, then director of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, to do her new play. Angela and Glen were invited to spend the weekend in Rottingdean with Enid and go over the play but, as Enid's biographer Anne Sebba records, when Enid was told that the Byam Shaws would have to leave early for their grandson's christening, 'Enid shouted down the telephone "I would never let a damn grandchild stand in the way of my work."' Enid Bagnold had many famous quarrels and the one she got me and the Churchills involved with she called the 'Great Vicar - Me Row' which entailed an enormous amount of my time in the High Court.

Since going to Wales in 1944 so many of my friendships have been with fellow dog-owners, and many of my letters to these friends and photographs with them feature in some way dogs such as Dil de Rohan's corgi, Junior; Enriqueta's four generations of Bedlingtons, each called Toby; Hermione Baddeley with her pug that had to be greeted with a kiss; Halina

Melnyk-Kaluzynska and her Italian greyhound Duni; and Flora Robson with her mongrel Jacky. Through walking our various dogs over the years, and often looking after them when others were on holiday or in hospital, we got to know each other well. Today, with Hermione dead, St Joan Duff-Assheton-Smith only remembers life at George Kinnaird's if I produce photographs with the dogs.

Hermione had abandoned her beautiful Californian home after the Manson murders next door and in her autobiography tells how a film star lover set out to kill her. She had started spending weekends in Brighton during **The Killing of Sister George's** 1966 run at the St Martin's Theatre and she always brought news of suicides among friends who had become enemies, or at any rate, as in the case of Hugh Benham, deaths passed off as suicides.

One day Hermione and I were on the Downs above Rottingdean with other dog-walkers when a gun shot rang out as we passed a copse, and my black labrador Caspar raced home panic-stricken. A few days later he was found poisoned. I knew that some people disliked what I was writing in Dublin newspapers while the civil war raged around Belfast. As a former British Ambassador to Eire, Gilbert Laithwaite wrote to me several times a week on that situation and his hypocrisy enraged me because I knew and he knew that the official cover-up of scandals such as that at the Kincora Boys Home would one day inevitably be exposed and make the political situation worse. But above all, I was disturbed by the blackmail involved.

Gilbert had behaved badly, like many, over the Stephen Ward affair and I wrote a piece I intended for **Private Eye** but I sent it to Gilbert first to see his reaction so that if he did not approve he could take legal action. He replied immediately, 'My dear R, Delighted to get your letter and your news. I read your **Private Eye** skit with amusement. I assume that there is no question of sending it to them, for nothing could be more embarrassing to your friend than to have it published, so, in terms of our friendship, I beg you to reassure me on this so that I can sleep at night. This is a quite serious appeal. So I look forward to hearing from you. Let us meet again one day for a meal. I should so much like to learn how you have been progressing, and greatly look forward to the new book. Yours ever, G.' Two days later Gilbert wrote, as usual by hand, 'My dear R, Thank you so much for your letter of yesterday, and I am so grateful to you for dropping your proposed P.E. letter, which would have been most embarrassing.'

Why did such an Establishment figure as Gilbert Laithwaite lie sleepless because of any revelation I might make? In order to keep in with MI5 after his 1964 confessions, Anthony Blunt had a number of meetings with Gilbert and me at his club, The Travellers. Gilbert did not want a scandal at The Travellers where he had been chairman and sponsor of many members,

including Hugh Montgomery. It was agreed that if ever Blunt was exposed in public as the Fourth Man, Blunt would resign from The Travellers, which he did.

Gilbert had been a most ambitious Under Secretary of the War Cabinet when I appeared with Brendan Bracken's Ministry of Information set in 1944. In the 1945 Bournemouth election, Gilbert privately expressed horror at Bracken's denial of his Catholic origins when up against the brilliant young Wing Commander Edward Shackleton. Over the years Gilbert's letters to me mentioned Shackleton quite often since whatever their political difference, they were both at various times President of the Royal Geographical Society concerned with my travel books. It was the national press and not my letters that gave details of Gilbert's friends in sex scandals, including one High Commissioner who was caught having fun and games through a hole in the wall of a public lavatory.

I did not send the 1972 piece to **Private Eye**, so allowing Gilbert to sleep at night. But a doctored version of a letter to me did get into **Conspiracy of Silence** and I told the authors they should ask Gilbert why his and my dead friend, Sir Robert Blundell, the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, had signed a warrant in April 1962 under Section One of the Official Secrets Act for the arrest of Donald Maclean and Guy Burgess should they return to England from Moscow, as rumour said they would. The authors wrote that I 'thought that Blunt had exerted pressure on Blundell to ensure that details of the warrant were leaked to the media.'

Bobby Blundell was a Harrow schoolfriend of both Cecil Beaton and Derek Waterlow, and in his Beaton biography Hugo Vickers writes, 'Blundell was his benefactor by introducing him to the acting crowd.' But Beaton soon went on from playing female roles with Cambridge amateurs, for he was influenced by that Fellow of St John's who started the restaurant backed by that other Cambridge lawyer, Hugh Benham. Blundell, the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate at Bow Street, had unique knowledge of the London criminal scene and he felt outraged when Hugh Benham got another court to send the young fingers-in-the-till waiter to prison. When Bobby Blundell died in 1967 I was living in Canada and Gilbert wrote me a sad letter of going down to Brighton for a last visit.

It is rare for anyone to be so widely, professionally active in both the law and many aspects of the arts, and in this respect Bobby Blundell was eclipsed by Jack Sarch. Born in Paris in 1914 as Jacques Zarchi of Russian/Polish emigre parents, Jack was brought to London and educated at University College School in West Hampstead where other Jewish families became his, and later, my friends, including Tomas Harris and Hedi Pillitz. In 1937 the Middle Temple called him to the Bar which in 1944 elected as its Treasurer

Jack's leader, Mr Serjeant Sullivan. When Pope O'Mahony asked me to be his secretary for the all-party talks on Irish Political Prisoners in 1947, it was Jack Sarch who introduced us to the staff of **Picture Post**.

In 1982 the editor of that once-important magazine, Tom Hopkinson, wrote **Of This Our Time** which I reviewed saying, 'In 1947 when I joined the aid for Irish Political Prisoners there were two Popes, one in Rome and the other then in London as our Counsel, Eoin O'Mahony. There were also two "Devs", the Taoiseach in Dublin and H F Deverson of **Picture Post**. However, that was not an easy time for Pope O'Mahony to rally newspaper support for our cause since a whole section of Fleet Street was closed to Irishmen and Jews, hence why we turned to Dev at **Picture Post**. In 1933 the Nazis imprisoned the brilliant Hungarian journalist Stefan Lorant. But he eventually got to London where he became **Picture Post**'s first editor. Meanwhile, Ezra Pound was very much a mouthpiece supporting fascism in Italy, and the progressive prince, Filippo Doria, although an invalid, had to flee in disguise to the Vatican for refuge. When the Americans entered Rome they had Prince Filippo appointed mayor and had their own compatriot, Pound, locked up in a mental hospital. Ironically, when Pound and his American cronies first came to Europe before World War One, they were drawn to the modern movement in the arts championed by "Filippo and Filippa" as the Cambridge-educated prince and his English cousin were called. Through being Filippa's literary executor I am only too aware of the sad story Tom Hopkinson has to tell in his book.'

Before joining **Picture Post** in 1945 Dev (Harry Deverson) had been a photographer with the Ministry of Information and Dil often used his work. After the **Sunday Times** moved to Gray's Inn Road in the 1960s its staff went to The Lamb pub so Dil and I saw a lot of Dev there because he was the paper's picture editor. After Dil saw the size of cheques the **Sunday Times** paid me for repeats of photographs, she started looking at her own collection of photographs used in the wartime black propaganda. But her scheme appeared both to Dev and me as barefaced blackmail and we instantly sought advice at Jack Sarch's chambers.

Dil concluded 'a complete hornets' nest' was against her and 'every one a Jew', including me. In her worst moments Dil screamed at me that one day someone really would 'smash in that great Jewish beak' as she referred to my nose. It had indeed been broken a number of times during my world travels and in the end my friend Alan Fuller, the ear-nose-and-throat specialist at King Edward's, Ealing, had to give me 'a new hooter' as he called it. Some of my elderly Jewish friends in North London had been subjected to anti-Semitic abuse that went beyond the stoning of their dogs and the desecration of the Holocaust Memorial in Gladstone Park but went on to fulfil Dil's

vicious prophesy that someone would smash my 'great Jewish beak,' although it was not Jack Sarch who represented me over that incident, but West Hampstead police. The young man who did the smashing seemed too young to have such a record of racial violence, but when it was read out to the jury he went berserk and threatened the judge for giving him such a long sentence.

Jack Sarch usually appeared for the defence in serious criminal cases, and did so for George Ince in the Essex barn murder trial. Outside the courtroom, Jack and I met frequently at the theatre or concert hall for he had a simultaneous and successful career as a playwright and impresario. In 1946 I had seen his psychological thriller, *The Lilac Fades*, for which Eric Hope wrote the music and played it backstage, although at my studio home, Eric Hope or his Royal Academy student, Peter Skuce take front stage when they come to rehearse. Shortly before Jack died in 1987, Eric gave a piano recital at the Wigmore Hall and I sat at the back of the hall with Peter Skuce's baby daughter Medee on my knee when Jack approached, 'My God, not more baby trouble?' he asked having seen me through my 1949 upheaval with Billy Gruffydd.

On 10 January 1929 the *Revue du Vrai et du Beau* wrote of Hedi Pillitz's Paris exhibition, 'although the artist's technique relies on accurate observation, one also has to admire her psychological understanding of the sitter, for example the majestic gravity of her "Miss Sybil Thorndike" where not only the form is represented but the sitter's thoughts.' What were the sitter's thoughts? To that far from tranquil playwright, Enid Bagnold, the forceful Dame Sybil said of herself and her actor husband, Sir Lewis Casson, 'Lewis and I are violent people.' And as an old woman, Sybil poured out her thoughts to her friend and biographer, Elizabeth Sprigge, the great enemy of Dil de Rohan.

I had known La Sprigge as the director of the Watgate Theatre, and later while she worked on her books about Picasso, Gertrude Stein and Jean Cocteau, I tried to keep de Rohan away from Sprigge to prevent the physical violence between them which Dil loved but Elizabeth hated. Jealousy consumed Dil over La Sprigge's literary success, and although their enmity originated with the love of Gwen Le Gallienne who lived with Sprigge, it was fuelled by Dil's failure to find a publisher for her *How Do You Do?* while Sprigge had always new books and translations of Strindberg's plays on the go.

Because he knew both parties and understood their love affairs, Jack Sarch was often called in to settle the disputes, and he had tried extremely hard to find Dil a publisher. The climax to all this came in 1962 when Jack's 80th birthday concert for Sybil Thorndike took place at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. Naturally, our list did not include Dil or Mary Oliver, George Kinnaid or The

Gorilla, or other drunks likely to use the occasion to settle old scores. And in 1962 Dil's Moroccan friend Ali Baba was very much in the mood for settling old scores.

In that year Sarah Churchill insisted on marrying Ali's ex-boyfriend, Lord Audley and taking her new husband to George Kinnaid's house in Brighton. If George lived for years with a human male called The Gorilla, Peter Churchill lived with a chimpanzee called Ernie, which caused Peter's grand cousin, the then Duke of Marlborough, to threaten *The Times* when the newspaper mistakenly claimed that it was Marlborough who lived with the chimpanzee.

Douglas Day in his biography of the novelist Malcolm Lowry states that Peter Churchill was one of Lowry's 'closest friends' and the death of Peter's wife 'sent Lowry into his final, suicidal depression.' Lowry had written a long report on Peter's *All My Sins Remembered* on 4 April 1957, but that book did not appear until 1964. Between those dates Peter's friend Francis Rose had written *Saying Life* featuring not only Dickie Mountbatten's entourage in London, but also the Paris of Gertrude Stein and 'the ballets of Serge Diaghilev,... and the romantic grace of Anton Dolin.'

The romantic figure of Anton Dolin in ballet tights had been captured by Hedi Pillitz who also painted his co-founder of the Festival Ballet, today's Dame Alicia Markova and her sister Beatrice Barry. These I acquired as gifts over the years from Hedi Pillitz but not her portrait of Ali Baba whom Dolin introduced to Peter Churchill and the Brighton scene. Peter felt he had to take Francis Rose's story a stage further, so he wrote, 'There was the theatre, particularly Jean Cocteau's rehearsal at the *Cigale*, and afterwards there was his talk, the funniest, wittiest talk I had ever heard, as we lay and smoked. These were the days of *la drogue*.' When Peter left Cocteau and Picasso to their opium pipes in Paris, he returned to Morocco to do the screenplay of *Les Hommes Bleus*.

Dil, Peter Churchill and Francis Rose all wrote in their autobiographies about Felix Yusupov, for he and his wife, Princess Irina, the Tsar's niece, had figured importantly in their lives. In 1934 the Yusupovs claimed and got astronomical damages from MGM for the portrayal of Irina in its film of Rasputin. After the Second World War when Peter Churchill was obliged to forsake Ali Baba for Joan Black's modest fortune from Belfast coal, the Yusupovs had become so down at heel that they were grateful when the new Viscountess Churchill asked them to a meal. Because of their success over MGM, Felix Yusupov scanned every newspaper and book hoping to find another libel windfall.

For the first five years of his life Felix had been brought up as a girl and by the time Adeline de la Feld went to St Petersburg, she found the prince as

camp as some of the Clumber hangers-on she had left behind in England. Indeed it was the Clumber favourite, Edward VII, who picked up a beautiful girl at a Paris theatre only to find it was the transvestite, Prince Felix. Because of the pressure group built up at the gay Rockingham Club started in London by Peter's friend, Toby Roe, for a change in Britain's law, Peter and Francis Rose went as far in depicting the homosexual scene as their publishers' lawyers would permit. The only act of transvestism they allowed Peter to describe was his escape disguised as an Arab woman during a siege of the fortress in North Africa where Peter and his sisters were evading a High Court order to make them wards of court.

If Cecil Beaton would include our friends in drag for his 1939 spoof **My Royal Past**, no photographs could be used of Prince Felix and the Hon Peter as transvestites with Edward VII in Paris, since Peter was both cousin and chief page to the king. At his coronation, the king's heavy train had been carried through Westminster Abbey by pages led by the Lord Chamberlain's son, Peter, and watched by the king's grandson, the future King Edward VIII, who would later, in the 1940s Paris scene, be glad to wine and dine the Churchills and Yusupovs. It was only after Jimmy Donahue started his affair with the Duchess of Windsor that Dil de Rohan got John Willis and Ali Baba to collect transvestite photographs which hardly differed from wartime Ministry of Information pictures. Those black propaganda photographs seemed indistinguishable from the ones Dil used later to blackmail both men and women who mistakenly thought they could forget their wartime homosexuality and settle happily to married life. But it was the supposedly happily-married ones, who, like Bugger-in-law Lord Beauchamp, had to flee the country. However, in the end it was Dil who had to flee the country never to return.

Before that, however, whenever she came back from travel abroad she liked a wheelchair to meet her at London Airport so that she could avoid the common herd's queues and delays, but the chair was quite unnecessary for as soon as she got to Selwyn House Dil would bound up the many stairs to check on how her illegal lodgers had kept the place during her absence. I watched her plane come in from Spain in 1962 and waited the usual time before realising Dil had been wheeled away in her chair for a strip examination by a woman Customs Officer who found small amounts of various drugs on Dil. Naturally, Dil suspected that Elizabeth Sprigge had tipped-off the Customs people.

Everybody regarded this as normal behaviour between the warring factions and Dil's friends in high places advised her to give London a wide berth for some time to escape prosecution. This prevented her from giving La Sprigge a black eye during Jack Sarch's 80th birthday concert for Sybil

Thorndike at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. And by the time he gave Dame Sybil a similar 90th birthday concert in the same hall, Dil had left London and, we hoped, our lives, for ever. People could relax and tell the spy-catching authors that to understand the extent of Dil's criminal career they must start with her CIA record in Washington. Dil intrigued Jack Sarch in his capacity as an Old Bailey barrister, but he did not like her in the theatre.

As the Pro Arte Society's founder, Jack combined a concern for theatre, ballet and music in a way few other impresarios do. He engaged many of the great names and I was always grateful when he got more requests than he could handle and passed my name on, as in 1970 when his friend Flora Robson wanted a screenplay from the Greek novel for one of Jack's numerous television dramas for which he often translated French classics. Flora's own busy life, even in old age, can be glimpsed in her letter to me of 21 December 1970, 'The Script is wonderful. I can see the snag, that the Cypriot producer saw, there will have to be two boys, very alike, to play Yorgaki. Will you agree to my sending this to my agent at Film Rights? She is collaborating with an Italian agent so that if George Cosmatos does not like it she can try it elsewhere. I have been working all last week in Newcastle for the "Brighton Belle" T.V. Series, so have only just had time to read the Script. I have till the 29th free, so I hope to see you, and maybe you could phone me about Agents.'

The projects on which I worked with Flora Robson gave me great pleasure as did our visits to Jack Sarch's Pro Arte events. Tory society in Brighton had a strong pillar in Flora but it surprised many of them when the High Court heard that I wrote her Tory speeches delivered in what Emlyn Williams praised as 'the beautiful throb of her voice and her impeccable diction.' In 1935, the **Daily Express** published a photograph captioned, 'Emlyn Williams, one of the most significant young men of the theatre today, sits to artist Miss Gwen Le Gallienne. Typewriter is more than part of the picture, for on it actor-playwright is writing a new play, while Miss Le Gallienne continues the portrait.'

Gwen's pre-war friendship with Flora Robson had long since turned to mutual animosity and solicitors' letters before I went to work with Flora in Sussex. Another actress, Joanne Lumley, wrote in the **Sunday Times** on 8 July 1984 that Flora 'didn't marry Tyrone Guthrie, who proposed several times, because he didn't want children and she did: so, in her words, she decided to marry her profession.' No bitter break-up like the one with Gwen resulted and Flora remained on good terms with Tony Guthrie as I saw on his last visit to her in Brighton while I was writing the screenplay of the Greek tragedy. Guthrie's BBC career began in Belfast and it certainly proved a tragedy for me in 1950 when I spent Christmas with his Naden relations in Washington and fell foul of Guy Burgess and the American immigration authorities.

They Did It Their Way

The Countess Frederika Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee responded arrogantly if anyone called her a Kilburn landlady. She lived overlooking Hampstead Cemetery and West Hampstead was her nearest underground station with Kilburn station also near, not that either she or the sheiks walked to tube stations. However, rich and poor flocked to Cricklewood Broadway for local shopping and to reach Hampstead Heath we had to go up Cricklewood Lane. In 1911 Frederika's fellow American, T S Eliot, wrote to Eleanor Hinckley, 'Cricklewood is mine. I discovered it. No one will go there again.'

By the 1980s Victorian non-Conformist chapels were becoming mosques and Hindu temples, and no matter how rough the Saturday night pub brawls they never kept the Irish in Sunday suits from crowding into St Agnes Church. Jo Brocklehurst had her studio close to me and peacock-coloured punks went to have their pink-striped hair-dos and fish-net stockings painted by Jo for some of the era's most beautiful posters.

Some of the punks on their way to and from Hampstead School passed a horrified Frederika's house, offending her Fascist instincts while they questioned her right to the sign claiming she held the non-existent post of area warden. When I told her how much I had paid for one of Jo Brocklehurst's posters Frederika said that not even a Cecil Beaton photograph of 'The British Empire' cost so much. Greta Garbo called Sir Michael Duff 'The British Empire' although history does not tell whether the baronet was in his Queen Mary drag when the actress first met him. Lady Diana Mosley observed, 'Michael Duff was a kind, rich homosexual, but even as a paradox such a name for him falls flat.' The photograph from Cecil Beaton's *My Royal Past* reproduced in this book certainly shows everybody else dwarfed by Michael Duff.

Frederika, Mary Oliver and Dil de Rohan all had American mothers who lived in Europe surrounded by the rich, famous and the titled. They knew Queen Mary's affection for places in Richmond Park such as Pembroke Lodge. Frederika's social ambitions received a rude shock one day when Jock Oliver, the then owner of Pembroke Lodge, went down the steps to receive Queen Mary while Frederika dropped a deep curtsy only to discover that it was Jock's fellow Old Etonian Michael Duff. To Frederika, royalty was no laughing matter, and she never hesitated to prophesy that Communism was bound to collapse eventually, but she did not live to see her prophesy fulfilled.

Jack Sarch's friends included Isaac Deutscher who shared his Russian-

Polish background as well as my literary milieu, and who had become editor of the *Communist Press* when only 19 before being expelled from Poland in 1932. When I arrived in London in 1944, Isaac had already been *The Observer's* 'Peregrine' for two years and his articles were syndicated in over twenty countries and kept MI5 and MI6 busy. Just as Jack Sarch did a lot of television work, so did Isaac Deutscher in addition to his many books on Russia, and while filming in Rome in 1969 a heart attack killed him. His wife Tamara carried on his work, especially on Trotsky.

A Russian Jew called Leiba Bronstein took the name of Lev Trotsky before becoming Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army in 1918 and astonishing many by expounding extreme militarism and far Left-wing ideology while claiming to be a pacifist. Stalin exiled him in 1928 and a number of home-made films show him and his family and their farming activities in Mexico where Trotsky was murdered. After her visit to the Trotskys' Mexican home, those films came into Tamara Deutscher's possession and we often talked about finding the best way of presenting them publically when, for example, I met Tamara at concerts or recitals by our friend Pauline Lowbury the violinist. Eventually, however, it was Tariq Ali who gathered Trotsky's descendants and friends at Tamara's Hampstead home to tell their stories before the television cameras in 1990. I went to Pauline Lowbury's home to see the Trotsky films for in spite of up-to-date gear in my recording studio, I have no television.

Our Russian connections intrigued Pauline's other visitors. Her Latvian grandfather, Dr Benjamin Lowbury, spoke Russian and many other languages which helped him in the 1920s when he set up practice in Hampstead with patients such as the first Soviet Ambassador as well as other Russians who were the doctor's friends. Dr Lowbury lived in West Hampstead's Menelik Road, a house still occupied today by his daughter Joan, a classical scholar, whose friend and neighbour until 1990 was Tamara Deutscher. This was the close-knit Jewish community I first met in 1944 when Mrs Wills and other evangelicals in Barry were giving diamonds and wedding rings in hopes of saving a few souls from the Holocaust.

At West Hampstead before then Anthony Blunt had got to know the portraitist Hedi Pillitz and many of her theatrical and musical sitters some of whom shared his taste in sex and politics. But the Hampstead artist and art dealer who most influenced Blunt was Tomas Harris whose sister, Enriqueta, still today enquires of me about her elder sisters' schoolfriends who used to do their homework in the Harris's billiard-room.

This North-West London community with its synagogues of various degrees of orthodoxy and Holocaust Memorial had been specially targeted by anti-Semites and Jack Sarch with other Jewish lawyers knew that the trouble

was stirred up not only by drunken hooligans beating up Orthodoxically-hatted Jews going to Sabbath prayers. The documents Jack took into court as my Counsel showed the involvement of teetotal Muslims who did not like dogs in Gladstone Park or the agonised posture of the bronze figures in the Holocaust Memorial. Miss Schwarz, who ran the Mission to the Jews, had introduced me in 1944 to this Hampstead community at the time Mrs Wills was sending Dennis Parry and me from Barry to London with diamond earrings and ruby rings. Long before the Second World War the Harris family had moved from West Hampstead to a Mayfair mansion where Blunt and Burgess took their MI5 cronies. But by the 1990s the only people still living in their original pre-war home as far as I know, is the family of the late Dr Benjamin Lowbury and I love parties there when I meet three generations of Dr Lowbury's descendants, perhaps celebrating one of Pauline Lowbury's musical events, often rehearsed in my studio.

Over the years I have taken many friends to Lowbury parties but never a neighbour from the house opposite, Countess Frederika Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee. For most she remained a mystery. In 1962 Enriqueta Harris and I had become responsible for much of Dil de Rohan's affairs and that year the generous Enriqueta gave Dil a small green car. The very first week that Dil got the car she insisted on taking me and her minah bird for a picnic lunch in Richmond Park where Countess Frederika and her sister Ellen joined us. When Dil was happy she radiated happiness and similar picnics followed at Hampstead Heath and Kensington Gardens, all places the three women associated with pre-war outings with their dogs which they had brought from Berlin when Hitler made life impossible there. This was the gist of their talk as I and others heard it and I simply assumed that Frederika and her husband had stayed with sister Ellen in London throughout the war. Only after the countess died and Halina Melnyk-Kaluzynska sent me Frederika's papers did I discover how Frederika had deceived me and how I in turn had deceived her Jewish neighbours.

From 1980 I lived for four years in West Hampstead. Because I was seen dog-walking with Frederika and other dog-walkers, the Lowburys and others in the neighbourhood naturally believed Frederika's lie which I put around in ignorance, that Count Heinrich had quarrelled with Hitler over the Jewish question and had to flee for his life with Frederika from Germany and ended up in the Jewish enclave of West Hampstead.

Frederika's papers included letters from the Waterloo Place Association at Richmond. One dated 27 May 1983 assured her, 'we all feel some concern over the appearance of No.5 Waterloo Place. We are sure you are aware that the front fence was knocked down some months ago and recently, the lion in the front garden was obviously forcibly removed. Unfortunately, this now

gives your house a most neglected appearance and the fact that the front windows have no curtains advertises its state of inoccupancy.'

Frederika bought houses and forgot about them. Dil would have loved to spend her old age in 5 Waterloo Place since she knew the street from the years when Mary Oliver reigned as Queen of Richmond Park at Pembroke Lodge. But it was not to be, for Dil offered to take Ellen in her new car on holiday and Ellen returned with remarkably few of her jewels. Solicitors took over when the police failed to locate the jewels and one more link in Dil's past snapped in acrimonious controversy.

The only mutual friend in West Hampstead whom Frederika considered suitable as an opera companion was Halina Melnyk-Kaluzynska, who after all had been engaged to the son of a once-reigning Hetman of the Ukraine. But whatever the past in Germany, Halina and I both saw Frederika as a passionate animal lover, and I loved taking her mongrel dog Susie out with Halina's basset Bonny and my own dogs around Hampstead Cemetery which Frederika's house adjoined. This was not always convenient for the local vicar who conducted many of the funeral services though not the Russian Orthodox ones which Halina and I arranged. A long **Daily Telegraph** obituary of 11 October 1989 noted, 'The Reverend Jack Dover Wellman, who has died aged 72, was for 33 years the vicar of a Hampstead parish where he was called on to handle many cases of occultism, hauntings and apparent demonic possession. The publicity surrounding his healing services drew troubled souls from far and wide... Many times, too, after he had prayed with someone alleging demonic possession, a dark shape was claimed to have been seen slithering away.'

Jack Wellman's own books detail his remarkable experience of the paranormal inside and outside Hampstead Cemetery and although he may well have had such psychic powers as to have seen Troy win the Derby ridden by Willie Carson, hours before the race, Jack certainly did not win the race against Countess Frederika. The vicar and the countess had one thing in common. Their homes attracted the attention of ex-prisoners at a nearby rehabilitation centre. Frederika's diamonds were stolen and buried but this did not get the headlines of a 1968 robbery at the vicarage when Jack Wellman chased the thief with a long ceremonial sword and held him prisoner in the street at sword-point until the police arrived. But it was not the burial of her diamonds in the cemetery by the thief that led Frederika to call Vicar Jack 'Common Thief' and 'Grave Robber.' After burial services Jack would wait until all had gone and then gather armfuls of the best flowers to decorate his nearby church. In her aristocratic voice Frederika challenged the vicar's right to remove the flowers when one of our friends died. Of course he had no right, and one gusty autumn afternoon when we were in the cemetery and saw the

grey-silk cassocked vicar with his pectoral cross smothered by flowers, Frederika snatched Bonny's leash from me and set about the priest. If Wellman had no right to steal the flowers he knew that we had no right to exercise the dogs in the cemetery, and especially not a powerful basset like Bonny who bit so many people that the hospital pressed for him to be put down.

Jack Wellman acted like, looked like and liked to look like a bishop and I had first encountered him in the war when he was one of Evan Tredegar's navy friends already in demand for exorcising houses haunted by murder victims. He did not become ordained until 1948 and according to Evan spent the war years inventing the most secret experiments for the Admiralty. My inability to see or feel the presence of ghosts which so violently shook Evan and Jack did not lead me to dismiss their experiences as hysterical nonsense for I had seen dogs' hair stand on end at places Evan declared haunted. When Frederika knocked the priest down with basset Bonny's leash, the dog leapt on top of him and I watched with alarm as the dog's friendly brown eyes turned amber like a traffic-light, always the prelude to an attack.

It was a particularly gruesome time in the neighbourhood because the same police who had conducted the law case against my assailant were now interviewing me about an ex-policeman called Nielson who had murdered a number of young men and buried them in a garden where Bonny often rooted around on his way home from Gladstone Park. Jack Wellman and I both allowed music students to practise on our pianos and we were distressed when one of these students suddenly disappeared, presumed cut up and boiled on Nielson's cooker before being flushed down the lavatory and the bones buried in the garden.

I did not relish such a conscientious if rather flamboyant character as Jack Wellman being savaged by Bonny whose owner, Halina, had so recently come from the Royal Free Hospital after Bonny had attacked her. I grabbed the dog in the nick of time and got him and Frederika home and then raced around to the vicarage on my bicycle. Totally restored to his usual episcopal self Jack told me of the long-running battle with the local authorities who owned Hampstead Cemetery and who had allowed many unimportant headstones to be removed and placed in a dry ditch between the graveyard and the adjacent playing-fields of University College School. Indeed, the ditch was so waterproof in places that ex-prisoners from the rehabilitation centre loved to foregather there to share drink and drugs and hide their latest loot under the rejected marble headstones.

Whatever his fame might be in the field of occultism over communication with the dead, Jack Wellman was as much concerned with the glue-sniffing children in the churchyard as Frederika was for the dead and for

dogs. He queried, as my neighbours and I had done, the plaque on Frederika's house announcing that she was the area warden for Menelik Road, a strange claim since she haughtily ignored neighbours and took her own tenants to court on the slightest pretext.

Frederika had entered the Roman Catholic Church in order to become a countess in the powerful Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee family. Indeed, so isolated was Frederika from society in the end that her vast collection of family papers were given to me by Halina Melnyk-Kaluzynska. Since childhood Frederika had kept daily letters from her mother and sister as well as rent-rolls from estates in Germany and England. The letters not only astonished me with their frankness about Frederika's decision to marry such a well-known homosexual as Count Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee, simply for the title of countess, but also with their detailed descriptions of the count's insane relations, letters which Frederika wrote to her sister who was herself in a London asylum.

German and Papal historians demonstrate the importance of the count's family. After the Diet of 1582 there was trouble over the archbishopric of Cologne whose holders showed indifference to their ecclesiastical duties. It was fashionable among leading German nobility to refuse ordination and simply exercise their authority as archbishops-elect, the last of whom was Count Salentin von Isenburg who retired in 1577 to marry as an imperial count. Gebhard von Waldburg, a cardinal's nephew, succeeded him, and although not opposed to ordination he too succumbed to sex and resigned as Archbishop of Cologne.

Frederika had adored giving dinner-parties at fashionable West End restaurants in the 1960s for the Very Rev Mgr Hugh Montgomery who in the 1930s went with the Papal Nuncio in Berlin, Mgr Eugenio Pacelli to be impressed by Count and Countess Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee's historic castles with their chapels crammed with elaborate memorials to family prelates. Pacelli had died as Pope Pius XII and Hugh Montgomery who had been a British diplomat at the Vatican in the war had to defend the Pope against the allegations made by the German playwright, Hochhuth, concerning Pius's role in respect of getting rid of the Jews. Many thought Hugh went too far in his claims of friendship with various popes and Douglas Woodruff, editor of *The Tablet*, wrote in his obituary of Hugh, 'one of his very last acts, was to write a letter to the Pope, for fear that it should come to his Holiness's ears that someone had spoken of the closeness of their friendship, when Hugh had never made any such claim, and wanted it to be known that the story had not originated with him.'

When Robert Wingfield-Digby left the priesthood and the Society of Jesus, to marry, Frederika gave up motoring all the way down to Mayfair to

make her confession. And she certainly was not going to her local parish church because it had been for long under the patronage of Mary Pilgrim, the converted Jewess sister of Hedi Pillitz. Jack Sarch fully understood the position for since boyhood at University College School in West Hampstead he had lived for years around the neighbourhood. However much I delighted in Jack's Pro Arte Society programmes with Tamara Karsavina reciting and the music of Bach and Handel, we took seriously the writings of my neighbour Tamara Deutscher and her husband. Difficulties encountered by the young concerned Jack all his life and when only 22 he had written about them in **Come Out To Play** staged at the Arts Theatre in 1937.

Jack and I sometimes walked from the desecrated Holocaust Memorial in Gladstone Park to the rehabilitation centre near Frederika's house and his old school's playing-fields, for many of Frederika's complaints to the police disturbed both Jack and Vicar Wellman. She owned a number of houses in Hampstead which like 5 Waterloo Place in Richmond, she left empty rather than let them, for tenants could sue too, and take their landlords to court which Frederika discovered at great cost.

The lawyer in Jack Sarch favoured restitution rather than retribution and he once persuaded a judge to send a man found guilty of fraud to the scene of his crime rather than to prison, so the man found himself cultivating orange groves under supervision in British Honduras in the jungle for the people whose money he had fraudently taken. Jack's criminal briefs at the Middlesex and the Old Bailey involving large-scale diamond and drug smuggling, led him to a fascination with Dil de Rohan's and Frederika's trans-Atlantic activities, dating from the 1930s to Dil's expulsion from Britain in 1965. Dil and Frederika were not the only American women to marry homosexual Germans for a title. Barbara Hutton's marriage to the tennis ace, Baron Gottfried von Cramm, was never consummated, as David Heymann pointed out in his biography of Hutton. All three women similarly attempted to claim large insurance sums on supposedly stolen jewelry and paintings which they had in fact bestowed on their lovers or other associates.

Jack Sarch shared his enthusiasm for music with Eric Hope, the pianist and author who for many years also shared Jack's home in the Hampstead area and starred in Pro Arte Society programmes. They were delighted when I told them that Barry Douglas, the young organist and choirmaster from my boyhood parish, St Simon's in Belfast, had gained second place in the National Television Young Musician of the Year Contest in 1978.

Before Barry Douglas went off to study at the Royal College of Music in London, his choir practised for a special occasion, the Memorial Service held on 11 June 1978 at St Simon's when Canon R C Ellis preached, 'The Church remembers Barnabas every year on June 11. His name, Barnabas,

means the son of consolation, the son of encouragement, the one who made you feel better for having met him, the one who put courage into you, the one who cheered you up and helped you to look on the bright side. How pleased he was when John Armstrong, son of a beloved organist was made a Bishop. Need I say more. After all he has been incorporated in a book by Robert Harbinson called "No Surrender." His name will live.'

I was sorry Canon Maguire did not live to see St Simon's organist, Barry Douglas, go on to win first place as a pianist in Moscow's prestigious international Tchaikovsky competition. How aptly Canon Ellis referred to Charles Maguire as 'Barnabas on a bicycle on the Donegall Road.' Many readers of **No Surrender** in 1960 knew I did not exaggerate when writing that Canon Maguire saved me so often as a boy from juvenile courts and borstal.

And Jack Wellman was to the Emmanuel Church, West Hampstead, what Charlie Maguire had been to St Simon's. Some might snigger at Jack's claims in **A Priest's Psychic Diary** but I knew people who left his healing services mentally recovered if not given back their sight or hearing. Jack took the cemetery flowers to adorn his beloved church and certainly the unemployed and those out-of-prison got more spiritual and financial benefit from Emmanuel Church than from Countess Frederika's rich home.

Only after hearing me speak at the BBC Memorial Evening for Louis MacNeice did Frederika tell me of her happy years living in Parson Blunt's Paddington parish when for love she nearly married Maurice, a dentist from Belfast. However, her letters which came to me after she died in 1988 revealed her family's stern warnings about marrying the homosexual Count Heinrich who adored Ernst Röhm's circle. But warnings notwithstanding and knowing perfectly well what she was doing, she did marry him and so into a princely family with castles as grand as those of the Grand Duke of Hesse and the Margrave of Baden. Her 1930s visitors Hugh Montgomery and Nuncio Pacelli died, but not the handsome young brother, Philip, of her Hesse friends.

The young brother changed his name on marriage and became Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, much to Frederika's joy, although the joy somewhat tarnished later when she read Tom Driberg's **Ruling Passions** where he tells how Lord Mountbatten asked Driberg to show Philip around Parliament. In 1951 Driberg had gone through a marriage of convenience with Ena Mary Binfield in order to cover-up his ruling passions, just as earlier Count Heinrich had married Frederika. And just as Driberg's book made no mention of his wife, so when Heinrich died in 1949, the press ignored the fact that he had married 20 years before.

Frederika was glad to leave the strict-rationing of post-war Germany and with her mother's American fortune, buy houses in Hampstead and Richmond. Her sister Ellen had been certified to stop her 'sleeping around

with Irish navvies' yet later, as an elderly hostess living alone in Richmond, Ellen spoke openly and bitterly about Frederika's frustration at never having 'had a real man.'

Despite her own threats to kill Francis Rose who introduced Frederika to Heinrich, at least Ellen escaped the sort of fate Christopher Hudson wrote about in the *Evening Standard* on 30 May 1991, where, to my surprise, he described James Pope-Hennessy as 'a louche, dilettantish homosexual who, at the age of 57, was beaten to death by an Irish navvy.' Peter Adair was certainly neither a louche dilettante nor an Irish navvy but a Belfast actor whose good looks captivated men as well as women.

A number of Barry Douglas's fellow students at the Royal College of Music lodged around West Hampstead, including Miriam Lowbury who studied the cello. Jack Sarch and I were delighted when Peter Adair's son Jeremy also came from Belfast, trailing great promise as a cellist at the college, and causing eyebrows to be raised in that broadminded institution by rejecting overtures in the endearing manner, 'Terribly sorry I'm not gay but me father is.'

Miriam Lowbury left her cello with me one evening ready for playing after supper, but first she had to visit Jeremy in a psychiatric hospital where illegal drugs had landed him. Some hours later she returned with a surprise visitor, Jeremy, who had just discharged himself specially to come and have supper and play music with others in my studio. And that was the last I saw and heard of that brilliant young man for shortly afterwards he jumped in front of a train.

His death saddened Jack Sarch and me, for quite apart from his Peter Adair connection with the theatre, Jack's work in the law courts centred around the smuggling of drugs and the rich barons who lived abroad beyond the jurisdiction of the English courts and confiscation of their ill-gotten profits. Jack hated the drug barons as much as he despised Frederika for keeping her houses empty while the homeless lived in Cardboard City under the South Bank Centre where his Pro Arte Society gave concerts. It was there, at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, that Jack had presented Sybil Thorndike's 90th birthday concert and when her friend, Hedi Pillitz, reached that age Jack drove her in his car to my home for what proved to be her last visit.

Over the years my books have featured cemeteries of various religions indicating the attitude of the living to the dead. I have shown how war memorials in Denmark and Ireland are fine and emotive works of art. But I found the Holocaust Memorial in Gladstone Park harrowing, its desecration puzzling. In *No Surrender* I wrote of my childhood, 'At home in an empty "Black Magic" chocolate box with a red tassel, I kept my poetry clippings. And while rambling in the city cemetery I culled poetry from the headstones

and added it to the "Black Magic" collection. I thought these jingles sad and beautiful.'

The 1980s clearance of unwanted memorials at Hampstead Cemetery had a precedent during the 1930s in Belfast including elaborate artificial wreaths whose flowers and doves were made of waxed paper or stone which deteriorated when the glass-bell covers got broken. The white marble plaques in these wreaths had blank sides and I would collect discarded ones and print lines on them that my mother liked from the Black Magic box. It helped to compensate her for the crude words, 'This is the burial ground of Robert Bryans' that she found so offensive on my father's grave. My father had not been 'saved' and so the evangelical relations would not permit the word 'love' to be used. I early learnt that sex was termed 'dirty tricks' and was therefore not love. Part of my pre-puberty rebellion led me to recite to the 'saved' great-aunts, the rhyme, 'Under these stones lie the bones of Mary Jones, but sure it is no wonder, for these are not the first stones that Mary Jones lay under.'

No one sought the salvation of London prostitutes more than William Gladstone, though some questioned the real psychology of a Prime Minister walking the midnight streets with 'ladies of the town.' He loved staying at the house in the re-named Gladstone Park while going to the prayer-meetings of the former Belfast shop-girl, Laura Bell, known as the Queen-of-Whoredom. An architecturally famous synagogue stands at the edge of Gladstone Park and Jack Sarch and I talked to its elders when we visited the latest desecration of the Holocaust Memorial. And naturally we talked about Berlin's exclusive suburb Wannsee for it was at the Wannsee Villa that 15 leading Nazis met in January 1942 to consent to the implementation of the Final Solution genocide of the Jews.

Perhaps the Wannsee house best known internationally in pre-war days was the residence of Prince Paul Skoropadsky whom the Germans had established as the Hetman of the Ukraine in 1918, and for whose son Danylo, a return to the Ukraine was considered by Hitler. A book was made of Prince Danylo's 1937 tour of North America and more than 150 photographs showed his triumphal progress among the Ukrainians there, many of the men wearing Nazi-looking uniforms, which they did at every Hetman family tour, all of which gave Hitler great satisfaction. The homosexual domination of the Ukrainian societies in England probably pleased the Führer less while his Nazi leaders could only speculate on the motives of those two Wannsee friends, first Danylo and then Hess and their one-way journeys to England.

More than Dil de Rohan at the Ministry of Information had an interest in the surprise arrival in England of Danylo Skoropadsky. Vera Brittain's husband, Sir George Catlin, wrote of Dil and Mary Oliver living in style at Pembroke Lodge in 1940, but Vera's own published diary of 1932 shows her

'talking over lunch till 3.30 & then Wells went off with a Russian woman, Baroness Budberg, whom he was taking out to tea & who happened to be in Boulestin's too; he was at great pains to explain that this coincidence was purely accidental.'

It was not coincidence that Danylo Skoropadsky during his 1930s visits to the Ukrainian societies in London stayed with Evan Tredegar and the Rt Hon John Hills MP, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, since John's brother-in-law was the son of those two Russian princely houses, Bultcher and Ouroussoff, connected with Evan's Russian father-in-law. While Dil de Rohan's fluency in so many languages earned her Brendan Bracken's regard in his Ministry of Information, he prized even more her knowledge of who was who in the Wannsee suburb of Berlin.

Dil certainly played hostess over a longer period to Prince Danylo than she ever did to her gay prince-husband, Carlos de Rohan. After the Night-of-the-Long-Knives in 1934, Francis Rose put into storage his furniture from the Bad Wiessee house he had shared with the murdered Ernst Röhm, but by 1944 when I started my 21 years of turbulent relationship with Dil the furniture had been crammed into her flat at Selwyn House. The thousands of North American Ukrainians did not turn out to form guards-of-honour only in 1937. Many went on political pilgrimage to the Hetman's Residence in Wannsee bearing suitable gifts for Prince Paul and his handsome bachelor son, Danylo.

The Wednesday Society of the 1930s included many who later joined the German Resistance and for its monthly meeting moved in rotation from one member's grand house to another. With her title of 'Princess' Dil had plenty of invitations but it was Lonsdale Bryans and Evan Tredegar whose ostentatious migration in style from one country to the next which attracted people such as Albrecht Haushofer at the Information Department of the Foreign Office and Karl-Friedrich Goerdeler. Although they were Swiss, Professor Carl Jakob Burckhardt, the historian who became Vice President of the International Red Cross at Geneva, and Hans Ulrich Gasser of the newspaper-owning family in Zurich, both played a role with Lonsdale and Evan as they did with Dil and me. Hitler in various speeches described Carl Burckhardt as 'ein Mann von Format' but nobody would have described Hans Ulrich Gasser as 'a most tactful person' as he filled the glasses and ears of American servicemen at Dil's Bloomsbury flat.

One day while walking the dogs, Countess Frederika suddenly asked what my family connection was with the local hospital for driving past it she had seen a sign 'To Royal Free Hospital' and a second sign under it to 'Bryans House.' I explained that Dame Anne Bryans, Senior Vice-Chairman of the Red Cross had been honoured because of her long association with the hospital. On 5 March 1965 Anne had written to me, 'Dear Robin, I have been

In touch with St. John's Gate and Miss Nicholls, the librarian, is expecting you to ring her up and make an appointment to see the Gate. I do hope you will find your visit interesting. It was nice seeing you the other night. Yours ever, Anne.'

She and her husband Jack had kindly arranged a dinner for a reunion between me and people from the Lonsdale Bryans side I had not met for years. Anne's friendly letter typified the good relationship we had enjoyed since 1944. My voice may well have had a touch of the Malone accent when I first arrived during the war at Anne and Jack's imposing London house in Lowndes Street when I was only 16 but credibly passing myself off as much older when Jack and I downed our drinks at The Pakenham with top businessmen who liked departing Guardsmen to wear clean socks on the way out while leaving behind their dirty ones as well as cane welts on bottoms. That master of the rod, Ernest Bryans, inevitably appeared in the spy-books and I wrote to Jack and his brother Max in detail about a sex scandal which I assumed Max would naturally have read in the press when he went to Belfast in the 1960s to research what he considered would become the definitive work on the Bryans family. It was only on the 15 January 1986 that I heard from Max saying 'I have decided to cease searching; it is too time-consuming and much too expensive.'

Max was at Oxford at the time when his Uncle Ernest was delighting the undergraduate Tom Driberg's gay companions with tales of Oscar Wilde who had been at Oxford with Ernest. But Max wrote to me that he had 'never any idea' that his fellow-students Driberg and Auden were Left-wing homosexuals. **Sunday Times** reporters first interviewed me in 1979 about Ernest Bryans as well as Jack's Bryans Aero-Equipment Ltd and by the time Barrie Penrose and Simon Freeman's **CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE** came out in 1986 I had already asked their publishers to check assertions by the authors which I felt wrong, especially the statement about Queen Mary who was dead like her five children, but unlike members of the Royal Household who not only knew me but wrote suggesting which items I should send to the Royal Archives.

On 5 November 1985 I wrote to Barrie Penrose, 'Thanks for ringing on Sunday. I got a letter from Simon Freeman on Monday in which he says "I think you have given us leads (the cult of royalty, for example) which will give the book an authority it would otherwise have lacked." True O King, but only provided you fully follow up my leads and to this end I presume your telephone call on Sunday concerned my visit to the director's flat at the Courtauld with Peter Greenham and what the Queen Mum said at lunch. Being related by blood, as well as snobbery, Anthony Blunt had a soft spot for the Queen Mum. Have you interviewed any special guests Anthony

invited to the Courtauld when the Queen Mum went there? Why did the Queen Mum go there?

'Only 25 minutes after I received Simon's letter did I receive another, much bigger envelope by hand from one of Anthony's 88 year old friends with full details of what the Queen Mum went to the Courtauld to see and why he invited the 88 year old friend. Simon had great difficulty in tracking down the Tomas Harris 1975 catalogue.'

This catalogue related to the exhibition of Harris's 'Paintings, Dry-points, Lithographs, Tapestries, Stained Glass and Ceramics' at the Courtauld Institute Galleries for which Blunt wrote the introduction dealing with the painter's life in the war as 'one of the principal organizers of what has been described as the greatest double-cross of the war - "Operation Garbo" - which seriously misled the Germans about the Allied plans for the invasion of France.' Another organizer of that double-cross was Tomas's sister Violetta who at an advanced age and bedridden had kindly sent me a copy of that 1968 exhibition of 16th to 18th century textiles which Blunt described as 'some of the most important aspects of silk-weaving and embroidery over three centuries . . . his family presented the whole of this magnificent collection to the Courtauld Institute in his memory.'

The press used Violetta Harris's name and mine in 1979 at Blunt's exposure when others who knew neither the Harris sisters nor me were accused of smearing the dead Tomas as the 'Fifth Man' in the spy ring. I immediately wrote to Blunt and demanded an apology which Violetta got, but that was too late, the damage had been done. In order to get at the truth Violetta sent me the 1968 catalogue of the Courtauld exhibition at which she and her sisters had met the Queen Mother.

Although a butler, cook and other staff graced Blessingbourne, Peter Montgomery had no great wealth and when staying in London with Hugh Benham he would go around the corner to the long-established Gow's fishshop so that we could eat before our evening of music. In his second year at Cambridge, Peter had shared rooms with Henry Maxwell and the young lovers delighted to be taken out to the theatre by Peter's older cousin Otto Mundy or to meet Otto's own Cambridge friends, the classics don Andrew Gow and A E Housman. In 1963 I wrote in *The Protege*, 'Otto's rotund figure rolled about helpless with laughter on the Thames's banks at Stanley Spencer's adventures with the old pram which held his painting gear. Yet with equal force Otto could be moved to tears. A E Housman's poetry always moistened his eyes, for Housman wrote some of his verse while staying at Winterfield.' Andrew Gow subsequently became Housman's biographer.

In the 1930s the Communist Blunt wrote for the Left while Henry Maxwell, a Tory as were Andrew Gow and Otto Mundy, wrote for the Right.

Blunt knew that Peter Montgomery and I kept up with Henry Maxwell and Hugh Benham and their Cambridge friends Andrew Gow and E M Forster. Yet it was the former Russian spy Anthony Blunt who went out of his way to look after Gow in his old age, writing an obituary of Gow in *The Times* in February 1978, saying, 'During the years after his return to Cambridge in 1924 he was almost the only don to take a positive interest in the art of the past and his rooms were the one place where one could find a good library of books about the Italian Renaissance, a fine collection of photographs, of paintings and above all, stimulating conversation about the arts in general.'

After Andrew Gow and E M Forster died Robin Middleton formed one of my main Cambridge links, he being a member of the Faculty of Architecture and Art History whose PhD work had involved Anthony Blunt. I also became well-acquainted with Robin's girlfriend, Ruth Lakofski, architect, sculptor and painter whose first opera was broadcast when she was fifteen years old. She kept a close eye on composition classes at my own music studio as she knew and encouraged the young students. But Ruth, like Enriqueta Harris, was one of my dog-walking friends for years and by the time Ruth reached her own studio she would remember some point about her latest sculpture at Cambridge or about a work of art wanted by the Getty Museum, and she would write me a long letter for delivery by hand the next day.

We were part of an international group with trans-Atlantic interests. Enriqueta Harris had long retired from the Warburg Institute when Neil MacGregor, editor of the *Burlington Magazine* persuaded her to fly to Texas to review a Picasso exhibition, she being a world authority on Spanish painting. We all felt pleased when Neil MacGregor became Director of the National Gallery, and when Ruth Lakofski's sister, Denise Scott-Brown, became co-designer with her husband Robert Venturi of the National Gallery's 1991 Sainsbury Wing. Jack Sarch and I appreciated these successes as Ruth had experienced humiliation at school in South Africa because her family were Russian Jews. Ruth found herself much more at home with the Indian community there, and especially with the Gandhi family. Anthony Blunt and I had been enraged when we discovered the extent of Dil de Rohan's anti-Semitism because for years she had taken Jews in Berlin and London for a ride, and none more than the generous Enriqueta Harris.

By way of flotsam and jetsam the tide of years has left me with many paintings and papers, mostly gifts, some of which Andrew Gow thought should go to Cambridge, as did his own collection. Building up the architectural library at Cambridge preoccupied Robin Middleton between his international lectures of the 1980s, so it pleased him to have some of my things while others, of a more personal nature from Adeline de la Feld's estate, went back to the House of Windsor. Before Lord Rosse came to my home to

pick up the latter, Andrew Gow's great-niece Belinda, came with her pianist husband Julius Drake and a score of other fellow-musicians after a concert to my home. Belinda at once examined my pictures as we discussed the French paintings and drawings bequeathed by Andrew Gow to the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. I told Belinda of my uneasiness with CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE, since she worked with the holding company of the publishers.

But when the publishers sent me a complimentary copy it amazed me to read Brian Sewell's account of delivering a painting to Andrew Gow at Cambridge. Sewell, a student of Blunt's I have never met, wrote, 'We had supper there, just the two of us. I was frozen with a kind of fear and distaste. I wasn't sure whether Gow was asking me to do something which I didn't quite understand. He went on and on about loyalty and out of that came the revelation. I suppose he had assured himself that it was safe to tell me. He said that he was responsible for recruiting Anthony and managing him. It was as direct as that. I found the whole thing alarming. He said that he had always controlled him. I can't remember us talking about motives. All I knew was that I wanted to get out of there as quickly as possible. I wondered if I could just get up in the middle of supper and leave. That is what I wanted to do. Here was this distinguished old man and I found him utterly cold, calculating and scheming...I should have said that he was a homosexual but he was impenetrable...Gow's pleasure was that of a voyeur, of watching other people. I don't know why he told me. But it was quite clear what he had said.'

Cambridge historians who knew Gow well quickly refuted this rubbish, for Gow, that old classics don, besides being a hard-boiled Tory like Otto Mundy with a matching contempt for Communism, had never been in a position to control Blunt as a Russian spy. Nevertheless, and not unnaturally, Andrew Gow's family felt affronted, although five years later Belinda assured me that, along with many of my friends and me, they did not regard CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE as reliable and therefore not to be taken seriously.

Jack Bryans, however, did take the book seriously, though further war books disrupted our friendship. There could be no denying that in the 1930s his father-in-law, Sir John Gilmour, had warned the Cabinet of 'a risk that the influx of refugees from Germany may include a certain number of Communists' and that these wretched displaced persons found a welcome at Adeline de la Feld's Deptford Institute. Jack felt equally certain that the many well-heeled Germans of the Wednesday Society in Berlin who sent Lonsdale Bryans on a peace mission to the British government in 1940 included no Communists. But as Lonsdale Bryans swigged down the vodka at Baroness Budberg's famous parties did he not suspect that she was Stalin's agent and that on behalf of Communism she globe-trotted as much as he did?

Jack Bryans knew such questions could never be answered and he concentrated on the question of who was who in the Bryans family. We had six John Bryans relations and one book muddled them up and Lonsdale Bryans did not help by using the ambiguous initial 'J' on his book **Blind Victory** since even the British Museum Reading Room catalogued it under John Lonsdale Bryans instead of James. Although Foreign Secretary Halifax did not accept Ulrich von Hassell's peace offer in 1940 via Lonsdale Bryans, nevertheless the British government gave Lonsdale official recognition and allowed him to attend secret meetings in Switzerland, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Madeira, as he writes in **Blind Victory**. On surrendering to the Allied Armies in 1945 General Dietmar stated, 'July 20, 1944, was the German generals' protest against such National-Socialist horrors as the Buchenwald concentration camp. Alas, it failed.'

But before that in 1940, the anti-Hitler elite of Berlin's upper classes had composed the Wednesday Society which chose von Hassell and Lonsdale Bryans as their spokesmen. Lonsdale Bryans writes, 'At a conservative estimate there was a total of 100,000 Germans (excluding Jews and aliens) continuously behind barbed wire throughout those twelve fantastic years of the Nazi Terror. Left wing and right wing, Socialist and Conservative, Free-Thinker and Catholic alike, they were all herded indiscriminately into this living death. "Charles" was their champion. "Charles" was their avenger. He was no politician, in the narrow sense. His faith embraced them all. His faith was freedom.' "Charles" was Lonsdale's friend, Baron von Hassell.

On 26 October 1946 the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* reported, 'Of all the Germans who attempted to fill up the gaps left by the sterile foreign policy of Hitler and Ribbentrop, Hassell was the most eminent and active, constantly concerned to maintain contact with the outside world and to explore all possible avenues that might lead to peace. The Gestapo and the Foreign Office refused him permission for journeys abroad, which he was still able to make at the beginning of the war. Hassell had early recognized that a road to peace could be reached only through the overthrow of Hitler and his régime, and he had the courage to direct his work towards this objective and to play a leading part in the German Resistance movement. He was always of implacable resolution, and would have deemed it cowardly to give up his residence in Berlin and withdraw to a purely literary activity.'

Baron von Hassell kept up writing about earlier statesmen in **Among the Shifting Scenes of Foreign Affairs**. But most important was his journal from 1938 until 7 September 1944 when he and others opposed to Hitler were sentenced to death. *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* continues, 'That Ulrich von Hassell's notes escaped the fangs of the Gestapo, whilst their author had to pay with his life for the revolt against Hitler, will, in view of the documentary

value of these suggestive pages, be some consolation for his tragic fate. In bequeathing his diaries, Ulrich von Hassell has raised a monument to himself and the German Resistance movement, and has opened out an invaluable source of information to the historian.'

The publication of the Hassell diaries caused great international interest, but many passages aroused speculation such as that dated 15 April 1940, 'Mr X reported that he had given my notes to Halifax, and he had shown them to Chamberlain without, as he said, mentioning my name. According to X, Cadogan is also generally informed...Halifax told X that he was very grateful for the information, that he regarded it as very valuable, and that he was in full agreement with the principles outlined...This morning I went for another walk with Mr X. I got the impression that Halifax and his people no longer had any real belief in the possibility of attaining peace in this way, that is by change of system in Germany. Mr X, however, again stated that Halifax's position was fundamentally unaltered. We spoke for a long time about Mussolini's attitude. I emphasized that Mussolini would very probably regard participation in the war on our side as the only way out.'

The diaries also caused speculation over the identity of Mr X's important friends. So a book appeared in 1951 called **Blind Victory (Secret Communications, Halifax-Hassell)** by J. Lonsdale Bryans ("Mr X" of the Von Hassell Diaries.") This is typical of the book, 'Entered into communication with various friends and acquaintances, with Mr. R.A. Butler (then Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Later Minister of Education), with my old friend Captain (afterwards Admiral) Troubridge in the Naval Intelligence Service, with my school-fellow Colonel (now Lord) Llewellyn (soon to become Minister for Food), Commander Thomson (Naval Adviser to the Prime Minister), Sir Nevile Henderson (ex-Ambassador in Berlin), the Master of Balliol College, Oxford (now a Labour Peer) and, last but not least, Mr Oliver Lyttelton (soon to become President of the Board of Trade.) As my contemporary at Eton, he wrote a most understanding letter about the business... This was the recurrent theme of all the rest - spiced and varied here and there by little personal touches. As when Mr (now Lord) Lindsay, the Master of Balliol (whom I had known since my Balliol days), said that he could not give me a letter to the American Ambassador as it would look as if he was going behind the back of the Foreign Office...'

Whenever I visited Ernest Bryans and other members of his immediate family, Balliol College entered the conversation nearly as much as Radley. In the **Balliol College Register** Lonsdale is described as 'grand-nephew of Rev. Prof. J.G. Lonsdale (Balliol 1833), Fellow of Balliol.' Just as I did not know every twig of the Bryans Ulster family tree that Ernest Bryans and his nephew Max cultivated for so long, so I never sorted out all the Lonsdale

family's bishops, deans and canons except, of course, for Christopher Lonsdale, founder and headmaster of Shawnigan Lake School on Vancouver Island where I went as a housemaster in 1950 and where Adeline de la Feld joined me.

As a fellow-Etonian proud to wear the old school tie in Moscow, Guy Burgess had known Lonsdale Bryans from the Anglo-German Fellowship of the 1930s when Lady Cunard introduced the German Ambassador, Dr Hoesch, to Mrs Wallis Simpson and Lady Bridget Parsons. But it was as personal assistant to the Tory Right-Wing MP, Captain Jack Macnamara, that Burgess learnt of Lonsdale Bryans's affair with Count Albrecht Bernstorff. Anne Sebba writes of the large jovial Albrecht, Counsellor of the German Embassy in London from 1922, 'Bernstorff became a well-known figure in London society. He did little to hide his homosexual tendencies.' Count Bernstorff was only one of Lonsdale Bryans's gay German friends to be murdered on Hitler's orders before the end of the war.

The club Albrecht liked to dine at was Brooks's and Lonsdale Bryans wrote in **Blind Victory**, 'Some time later I was much pleased to receive a letter from Lord Ilchester, who was Trustee for Brooks's, in which he referred to my action on this occasion as having been "invaluable to the club." Lonsdale never having married, always made Brooks Club his London headquarters, but it was more practical for Lord Ilchester, Evan Tredegar, Lonsdale Bryans, Mrs Margaret Turner, the tenants of Llanover Castle and me to meet at the castle for reporting and assessing the up-to-date observations of Rudolf Hess and his mental condition. Lord Ilchester's daughter, Lady Mary Herbert, conveniently owned Llanover Castle, while it was her brother, John, who demonstrated the contempt they all felt for the former Welsh pit-boy, Nye Bevan, by kicking him down the steps of a gentlemen's club.

On 27 October 1944 I went from the Barry School to spend a weekend at Llanover, under cover of a preaching engagement but chiefly to get pheasants and other food for Dil de Rohan, as well as the latest news on Rudolf Hess and his real or faked neurasthenia. On the same day as I went to Llanover, the Director of the Museum of Wales, Sir Cyril Fox, lunched at Brooks's with James Lees-Milne of the National Trust to discuss what Lord Tredegar would do after the war with the architectural gem of Tredegar Park. Sir Cyril said, 'The aristocracy are all the same. They keep to themselves, and are afraid of outside contacts. I do not expect them to fraternize with a mere ordinary citizen like myself, but they might discuss cultural matters with me on a common level.'

Had Sir Cyril been 'a mere ordinary' seaman he might well have experienced what the 'cultural matters' actually were that obsessed Lord Tredegar and his aristocratic friends. James Lees-Milne's war diaries published

in 1977 tell me how Evan Tredegar's heir, John Morgan, had found in Evan's bedroom 'instruments of the most bloodcurdling nature.' Fourteen years before that I had written in **The Protege** of Evan's rival would-be possessor of P B Shelley's soul, the Rev Frank Shelley-Mills, 'I crossed to the "Ark of the Covenant." In it lay a tangle of whips and belts, handcuffs and revolvers, and Vergas, the bull's penis verga which until recent times was carried by South American men as a mark of social distinction....Frank explained why he had bought these things. He believed that most had come from Nazi concentration camps and prisons - but only from places where Jews had been massacred.'

I went to 39 Elizabeth Street because I admired Kenneth Walker's books and Frank Shelley-Mills's editing of them and naturally felt not a little flattered to be asked my opinion from time to time on the editing. But Frank's obsession for bondage terrified me as I explained in **The Protege**. He carried beatings to the point of death. And it had all started as a schoolboy when he met Ernest Bryans at Radley. It seems doubtful whether the facts about this Anglo-German Fellowship of the whip will emerge when the British and American governments lift the embargo on the Hess papers in AD 2017.

After the war tens of thousands of medals were handed out to soldiers and sailors and airmen some of whom had learnt many tricks while being in German prisoner-of-war camps or in Mayfair drawing-rooms after being picked-up at Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park. Lonsdale Bryans neither got nor expected any medal or any other reward for his dangerous missions on behalf of the Foreign Office. There were many double-crosses apart from Operation Garbo. Guy Burgess knew why I had been satirised in **The House on the Sand** which had Winston Churchill in the audience, a man for whom the Communist spy Guy retained a contradictory devotion. Headmaster Lonsdale liked the Eton connection with his cousin Lonsdale Bryans, and he had built Shawnigan Lake School so that it became known as 'The Eton of Canada.' The devious Old Etonian, Guy Burgess, soon had Adeline de la Feld and me leaving Vancouver Island in haste, before fleeing himself to Russia.

Somebody who had not been Lonsdale Bryans's contemporary at Eton or Balliol was Brendan Bracken, the former protege of Evan Tredegar who had, of course, gone to school and Oxford with Lonsdale. When Tredegar hooked his fellow-convert, the Duke of Marlborough, as another upper class fish into the Roman Catholic net and the Pope declared the Duke's marriage to Consuelo Vanderbilt as 'null and void,' the Irish Catholic Bracken took the side of the Protestant Churchills, remaining Winston's close friend to the end.

By the 1951 publication of **Blind Victory**, Afro-Caribbean immigrants were becoming a familiar sight in many British cities and apart from some politicians' extravagant language about blood flowing in the streets as a result

of it, intelligent people avoided abusive racial talk, so that more than Anthony Blunt and Brendan Bracken expressed surprise when Lonsdale Bryans persisted in using terms such as 'buck nigger' even in print and twenty years after the outrageous but typical Countess of Oxford who, referring to Nancy Cunard, enquired of Nancy's mother, 'What is it now? - drink, drugs or niggers?' Although Evan Tredegar was dead and beyond the reach of libel when **Blind Victory** came out, Lonsdale mentioned neither him nor the murdered Albrecht Bernstorff who enjoyed the 'instruments of the most bloodcurdling nature' at Tredegar Park.

Evan got a friend to prevail on Winston Churchill to send Alfred Douglas a message of forgiveness about the criminal libel case that landed Bosie in prison, but no such gesture was forthcoming from Evan over T S Eliot and modern poetry. With the exception of Felix Hope-Nicholson, I could not persuade any of Evan's friends to talk to the spy-catching authors, and since Jack Bryans refused to disclose papers for their researchers, the authors consequently made mistakes and saw Jack's refusal as another conspiracy of silence particularly as my friends from the wartime Ministry of Information also declined to be interviewed. Inevitably, people concluded that facts were being hidden to protect the highly-placed, alive or dead.

The statement General Dietmar made when he surrendered to the Allied Armies in 1945 has been viewed as his 'deathbed repentance.' If 'the German generals' protest against such National-Socialist horrors as the Buchenwald concentration camp' was so strong by 20 July 1944, why did the nightmare go on until the early summer of 1945, when Hitler murdered another 5000 of his German opponents, of whom only 400 were officers in the German armed forces? Those figures, of course, did not include the millions of Jews who perished at Buchenwald and other mass-murder centres.

The Hess papers undoubtedly name the names of those highly-placed people in Britain who wanted the war to stop and those who did not want it to stop. The official embargo on the Hess papers until AD 2017 disgusted Jack Sarch. Stalin also murdered millions of Jack's fellow-Jews and in Jack's opinion those who survived the war, but who would hardly survive to AD 2017, had a right to know not only how their families perished but whether they need have perished at all. If the war could have been stopped earlier, the Holocaust may never have happened.

So, no wonder the Hess papers are secret until AD 2017. It disgusted Jack Sarch that a handful of aristocrats and murderous Your-Country-Needs-You British Empire jingoists were protected by an Anglo/American cover-up over the Hess papers while the Jews could go to hell so far as their exterminated families were concerned. On the other hand, it seemed highly

unlikely that peace-maker Lonsdale Bryans, who as late as 1951, was writing about 'buck niggers', had a sensitivity to Jews greater than his admiration for blond German heroes so prominent in the Anglo-German Fellowship.

In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Carl Jung recalled his native Basel as it had been before he went to fame and fortune in Zurich, 'I still remember the days when Bachofen and Burckhardt walked in the streets.' That was Jakob Burckhardt who prophesied when news arrived of Kaiser Wilhelm I being crowned at Versailles, 'That is the doom of Germany.' In Zurich, close to Jung's institute, Ernst Burckhardt had his architectural studio where he and George Balcombe were working on a design for the 1956 Sydney Opera House Competition, Ernst having made his name in Germany as well as in Switzerland for his theatre designs.

Countess Frederika Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee was born in Switzerland and lived longer there than in either Germany or the USA, and she had kept up her Burckhardt connections from before the time Carl went as the League of Nations High Commissioner to Danzig and Ernst was designing his famous cinema in Zurich. When she lived in London in the 1920s Frederika had known Ernst who was working in West End theatres as a designer in company with such people as Derek Waterlow and Hermione Baddeley. Frederika loved to receive invitations to German Embassy celebrations from Albrecht Bernstorff who was well known to her future husband, Count Heinrich. Ernst Burckhardt and Lonsdale Bryans went on many sketching expeditions, often starting at Bradford Priory in Wiltshire where Lonsdale's cousin, Herbert Bryans was a well-known stained-glass artist.

Lonsdale's friendship with Evan Tredegar began in Eton's art classes but whereas Lonsdale stayed the full five year course, Evan left 'under a cloud' because even before he was sixteen his indiscretions in and out of the art room proved too much for the headmaster. Those were the days when, following the example of their Victorian forebears and of Marcel Proust, people still went to look at stained-glass in English churches, taking with them Herbert Bryans's *Stained Glass from the Earliest Period to the Renaissance* first read before the Oxford Architectural and Historical Society in 1910.

Nobody ever knew whether Eton or Evan lost most by their enforced separation but Evan made sure that everybody knew he associated with his fellow-Catholic, the artist Eric Gill, each of them given to admiration of the size of their own penis, Gill indeed never wearying of sketching the exact measurements of his. Gill then belonged to the Ditchling School of Painters in Sussex, when the Brighton *Evening Argus* was praising not only Gill's exhibited work but William Balcombe's oil painting of the shell-shattered ruins of Arras Cathedral in the First World War, which Winston Churchill

also painted, prints of it going on sale in 1991.

But all roads for the artist led to Rottingdean not merely to do outdoor sketching of the old Balcombe home seen across the village pond but to study the seven stained-glass windows by Sir Edward Burne-Jones of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in St Margaret's Parish Church. The people in this group most frequently in Rottingdean were William Balcombe and Albrecht Bernstorff and Enid Bagnold who, although fully aware that the huge German diplomat was homosexual, fell in love with him, and later wrote, 'Albrecht had such immense floatability. I thought I should see him again. He was my very last love before closing time and I liked and respected him as well. Also I wasn't kind to him about Hitler and I feel remorse. I thought in those days that Hitler was a new God and Albrecht a donkey not to see it. And he has paid by being swung on his poor huge neck.'

Lonsdale Bryans wrote, 'These precautions were most necessary owing to the pressure of the Fascist and Nazi secret police, which was strong even in Switzerland' as he found when travelling from Zurich to the mountain resort where Baron von Hassell visited his asthmatic son, having got special permission to do so. It was there in 1940 on a mission sponsored by the British government that Lonsdale Bryans had to make contact with a 'tall man with a small moustache and light brown hair' who went by the code-name of Charles and whose photograph Bryans carried.

Many people in the German Resistance had physically changed since the war began, some so drastically that they could not be recognised from pre-war photographs. One was Albrecht Bernstorff whose huge bulk had shrunk after months of torture in a concentration camp, yet this did not lessen his adventurous spirit and he subsequently made a number of trips into Switzerland to get passports and visas organised by Dil de Rohan's Swiss department at the Ministry of Information in London. Lonsdale wrote of his great difficulty of recognising strangers from pre-war photographs, 'I even went to the length of planting myself in a conspicuous position outside the Hotel Isla and attempting to make a water-colour drawing in a blizzard of the snow-topped firs and distant peaks in front of this Alpine sanatorium for asthmatics.'

A Swiss family called Schorno boasted no less than seven sons and six daughters whose early 1930s photographs show them to have been virtually unchanged ten years later when Lonsdale Bryans searched Schorno country seeking a tall man with a small moustache. The Schornos were musical, Karl playing the tuba and Walter the clarinet in the Musikverein Dielsdorf of which they were founder members. The group photographs of these musicians show that most of them sported the then fashionable small moustache as indeed did Hitler. However, the clarinetist Walter's uncanny, exact resemblance to the Führer threw the Swiss authorities as well as the British spies and Nazi

secret police into confusion.

In the end Baron von Hassell made contact with the water-colourist outside the Hotel Isla. Reviewing **Blind Victory**, the **Times Literary Supplement** said, 'Code-names and secret meetings in Switzerland formed part of this venture, which, the author, writes "could well have brought about an early victory and have consolidated lasting peace, if it had been permitted to develop and had not been opposed and closed down by the (British) authorities."'

When Winston Churchill realised the sort of network Lonsdale Bryans was running and how damaging it was to Anglo-Soviet relations, the authorities had no option but to put an end to it. But Churchill himself had lost office and favour on the publication of **Blind Victory** in 1951, a book whose title was a back-hander at war-victor Churchill. Many people still living then felt grateful not to be mentioned in **Blind Victory**. R A Butler did not appreciate having his friendship with Lonsdale Bryans told in the book. There had been blind dates with young boys camping on an estate at whose parish church Butler was a churchwarden.

After the war Butler became Home Secretary and therefore head of the security services and he said of another Eton friend, Guy Burgess, 'Of course, if he does come back and the Home Secretary takes no action then I'll be criticized, the press will be after me, but I'm prepared to face that...Tell him I'll stand by what I say.' Butler was also responsible for the police and he did not like the gossip about Lonsdale Bryans's former circuit in 1930s Berlin with Ernst Röhm and Francis Rose presiding while Evan Tredegar and Peter Churchill did the London honours. One day the truth would be published with Cecil Beaton's claims about Rose's killings and suicides.

Dil de Rohan wrote in **How Do You Do?** 'Admiral Hall was the popular head of Censorship. Censorship was conducted with a fairness that was a national credit. There was little idle snooping on civilian letters, if someone digressed in a mild way against coupon regulations for food or clothes, they were not denounced or spied upon. Censorship was a security war measure and was treated as such...There was an influx of hand-picked Swiss editors, publishers and so forth, and I took pride and trouble to conduct them round London myself.' The favourite and most enduring of these connections was Hans Ulrich Gasser whom Dil called one of the Swiss Astors because his family owned Zurich newspapers.

More important for Dil, however, Hans Ulrich Gasser ran a Zurich art gallery and had been in love with Dil's lodger, John Willis, who traded in pictures too hot to be auctioned in London. In view of the public outcry caused by the sentencing of Ivor Novello to prison for having a small amount of illegal petrol, Dil surprised me by writing that nobody spied on such minor

offences.

Dil also wrote, 'Sir Alexander Korda who was still with M.G.M. but was forming his own company, London Films Production. During the course of one of our conversations he asked me whether I would like to join him as his film editor. This pleased and interested me enormously, but I could not abandon the idea of re-starting my Ready-to-Wear business for which I had made so many sacrifices and spent so much money before it became a prosperous money maker. I wrote to the Swiss manufacturer imploring him to come to a concrete decision.' Dil found the idea of joining old friends in the film world irresistible, but when she eventually worked out a satisfactory deal with the manufacturer of her Swiss textiles, she deserted Korda and went back to Paris to set up her business again. She left Katusha and John Willis in London to run the Selwyn House flat while John travelled between London and Zurich with pictures for sale in Hans Ulrich Gasser's gallery.

No mystery attached to where Dil got the money from to set up a large establishment in Paris. Not from Britain because stringent currency restrictions made that impossible, but from Switzerland. Dil's pre-war Swiss connections and the Swiss diplomats she met in London through her wartime job as head of Swiss affairs at the Ministry of Information served her in good stead for salting money away in her Zurich account.

After the war Karl Schorno bought the Zum Kreuz Inn at Gächlingen 30 miles outside Zurich. Ernst Burckhardt loved such village venues and took Derek Waterlow and George Balcombe and other English friends to meals there. But George and Derek did not like Dil's mishandling of money which they rightly suspected she stole not only from Save-the-Jews collections but also from wartime funds meant to pay for buying those passports over which Albrecht Bernstorff so courageously risked his life.

In 1958 Frederika Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee was delighted when I told her that Ernst Burckhardt would be coming to London to arrange a Swiss architectural exhibition and that Dil de Rohan planned to get people from our wartime Anglo-Swiss connection to turn up at the exhibition reception. Ernst had not met Lonsdale Bryans since the days of secret meetings outside Zurich during the war. On the other hand, I had seen Ernst many times and he always came back to the question of who it was that got Lonsdale's peace negotiations closed down. Even before the war started, the German Resistance to Hitler had consulted Carl Burckhardt as a European crisis authority to approach Lord Halifax on terms of settling their differences. Lonsdale Bryans took over when Carl Burckhardt became Vice-President of the International Red Cross and Anne Bryans was made Deputy Commissioner, War Organization, of the British Red Cross. These matters still remain serious because of the horrific consequences for many millions of people, Jews and non-Jews alike. The

central question is whether an early peace would have prevented the mass slaughter. If so, then those who decided for war, not peace, bear a terrible guilt. The British and American governments have good, or probably bad reasons for placing an embargo on the Hess papers.

Sinister tentacles from the 1930s and 40s seemed to reach out to entwine our lives in the 1950s and after. Often we had sudden deaths to report to our friends. Nevertheless it came as a shock when George Balcombe telephoned me to get from Lonsdale Bryans a thumbnail sketch of Ernst Burckhardt in 1920s London, for Balcombe had been asked to write an obituary about Ernst who had been killed in a car crash on his way from Dover to London for the opening of the Swiss exhibition.

As the founder of the Pro Arte Society, Jack Sarch took an interest in Karl Schorno's grandson when Daniel Schorno left Zurich in 1984 to study composition and the cello in London with Jack's old musical set, many of them Jews who had escaped from Germany in the 1930s. But Jack remained a lawyer as well as a music lover, and anxious to know why the excessively jealous Brendan Bracken had persuaded Winston Churchill to close down Lonsdale Bryans's peace activities which might have saved the lives of millions of Jews.

My life in Zurich is recorded in a number of places, including **Summer Saga**, the book I wrote about Iceland in which I noted, 'my notion of going to Iceland no mystery clings at all. It started in Zurich at the Studentenheim. A hundred different languages echoed about the place.' Some of the students attended classes at the C G Jung Institute and although then, in 1956, its activities still centred around the old but still-active Jung, I wrote of the Russian Dr Vladimir Alexandroff being the important influence in our lives through his musical evenings with his wife and daughters.

Three German sisters had fled from the Nazis to Switzerland and in 1948 one of them, Aniela Jaffé became the first secretary of the C G Jung Institute. As a Jungian psychoanalyst and Jung's longstanding friend, Aniela was entrusted with the recording and editing of Jung's **Memories, Dreams, Reflections**. She not only introduced me to a number of interesting staff and students but also found me a room in the old city centre at the Gelber Leue Inn which had association with James Joyce who was taken there by Hans Ulrich Gasser, one of the mourners at Joyce's funeral in Zurich, a subject which W R Rodgers recorded for the BBC.

I wrote in **Summer Saga**, 'These chains of morality loaded the lively youngsters too heavily. When they heard that I lived in the attic of the Gelber Leue along with the gurgling water cisterns and the barmaids, they decided to spend their late evenings up there with me... Two Israeli girls took me to their generous Jewish hearts. In this context I offended nobody - my nose is

like Fagin's and even the Greeks admitted their mistake when they saw how clearly Jewish I was.'

Many people thought me wholly Jewish and often I did not disillusion them with complicated explanations about the fact that my maternal grandfather may have been a Jew, and so I readily let them regard me as one of themselves. But Aniela Jaffé, the Jewish refugee from Germany, now largely running the C G Jung Institute, wanted to know about my past and about Lonsdale Bryans in Zurich during the war when Aniela was trying to get friends out of Germany.

While researching in the library at Basel University I took a day off and had lunch in Zurich with Ernst Burckhardt and George Balcombe as they worked on their scheme for Sydney Opera House. The following week I went to Zurich again and stayed four months trying to fathom one of Jung's most famous and fascinating dreams.

Jung wrote in his foreword to **I Ching**, 'Since I am not a sinologue, a foreword to the Book of Changes from my hand must be a testimonial of my individual experience with this great and singular book. It also affords me a welcome opportunity to pay tribute again to the memory of my late friend, Richard Wilhelm. He himself was profoundly aware of the cultural significance of his translation of the **I Ching**, a version unrivalled in the West.'

The **I Ching** originated in the 4th millenium BC and in modern times became particularly associated with a translation finished in Peking during the summer of 1923 by the German missionary, Richard Wilhelm, who had become a celebrated Chinese scholar by the time Lonsdale Bryans and Evan Tredegar turned up in Peking. On returning to Germany, Wilhelm joined the faculty of the Chinese Institute in Frankfurt where Lonsdale Bryans and Carl Jung went to hear him, Jung observing that the lectures 'turned out to be scarcely any different from conventional sermons.'

Certainly the sermons given in Balliol Chapel, Oxford, by the Rev Professor J G Lonsdale were conventional compared with the written views of his great-nephew Lonsdale Bryans. As he spent days in the snow sketching in water-colours while awaiting Baron von Hassell, or as he talked to members of the Psychology Club in Zurich, Lonsdale Bryans contemplated more than the destruction of millions of Jews in Nazi gas-chambers. He was engaged on the most ambitious of his books, **The Curve of Fate (On the evolution of man)**. My Belfast friends professionally involved with Jung included Elizabeth Nicholson, Bishop MacNeice's daughter, and she, together with Lonsdale Bryans, longed for their alma mater, Oxford University, to recognise Jung, which it eventually did. They also wanted him to meet that other Chinese scholar, John Hind, who left Belfast in 1902 and became Bishop of Fuh-Kien in 1918 and who firmly subscribed to the astrological

notion that the Irish qualities in his nature derived from the location, time and circumstances of his birth in Belfast. Jung and Louis MacNeice wrote at length about this belief in the importance to a person's life of the auspices associated with their birth.

Ernst Burckhardt shared Jung's Basel background and had gone on many sketching tours with Lonsdale Bryans before the war. Lonsdale's more extensive journeys all over the world concerned his interest in anthropology and it was business connected with the translation into Italian of a book he wrote on that subject that persuaded Foreign Secretary Halifax in 1940 to allow Bryans to visit Rome since the Schwarzhaupt Verlag in Leipzig were also in the throes of bringing out a German edition. Few British authors had their scientific views published in enemy countries during the war, although Italy was not at the time in league with Germany and Bryans had a good relationship with Princess Soutzo, the wife of a Counsellor at the German Embassy in Rome, who ran a group of Germans opposed to Hitler. Princess Soutzo had been in Dil de Rohan's pre-war Berlin set and was well placed to get Lonsdale in touch with Baron von Hassell, the former German Ambassador in Rome, when Hassell, now head of the German Resistance, went to visit his asthmatic son in Switzerland.

In the introduction to *Back to Methuselah* George Bernard Shaw argued that evolution progressed by a series of relatively sudden developments. In his globe-trotting research Lonsdale Bryans kept up with his scientific friends on the biological theories backing Shaw's concept. But as the scientific correspondent of *The Times Literary Supplement* wrote in reviewing *The Curve of Fate*, 'recent biological theory, has been elaborated by Mr Bryans to an astonishing conclusion.'

The Curve of Fate cost 12s 6d which was expensive during the Second World War when compared with the 3s 6d Fabers charged for *The Church Looks Ahead* by T S Eliot, Dorothy L Sayers, Father d'Arcy, and other leading theological voices who had been engaged by the BBC to uplift the spirit of Britons at war, and the TLS stated, 'the authors are to be congratulated on having produced a most optimistic and constructive piece of work.' On the same page, immediately underneath this 'reconstruction of human society after the war,' the reviewer of *The Curve of Fate* noted that Lonsdale Bryans's 'implication is that we are approaching at a rapidly increasing tempo the end, or alternatively the beginning, of the world - that is to say, of the world of mankind as we know it and not of the planet earth. It may be within a few years at longest or within a generation or two, he tells us, that the new Man will appear, and the man we know as the "paragon of the past" will be realized as the "parody of the future." Of the type of this coming superman he has no doubt. It is that of the Christ, concerning Whom he makes the significant

distinction that He was good because He was great and not great because He was good.'

Lonsdale Bryans's new book outraged that son of the parsonage, Carl Jung, and the British Foreign Office regarded it as the wrong sort of propaganda in the middle of a war. So Foreign Office sponsorship of Lonsdale's secret missions with the German Resistance was withdrawn, and indeed Lonsdale terms the last five chapters of his *Blind Victory* as 'Government-Opposed' missions. Notwithstanding the value of T S Eliot's 'constructive piece of work' for the BBC and Lonsdale Bryans's destructive piece on the Christian ethic there remained the question of a future for those Jews who had escaped the gas-chambers.

Blind Victory observes, 'To Mr Churchill, as the world knows, we owe a debt that it would not be easy to assess. A Prime Minister, however, is necessarily hedged round by a bodyguard of persons whose mission in life it is to save their chief from being unduly worried by non-essential matters. It seems possible that, on this occasion, Mr Churchill had little or no knowledge of the opportunities which were being thrown away, especially as he could not supervise everything himself and was compelled to delegate many weighty affairs to ministers and heads of departments.' The libel laws prevented Lonsdale from going any further in pointing the finger at Brendan Bracken, that 1920s favourite of Evan Tredegar, a favourite who never came to terms with Evan's schoolfriend and fellow-artist, Lonsdale Bryans. I understand why the British and American governments have put an embargo on the Hess papers. Lonsdale Bryans knew several of those who reviewed my own books, such as Sir Alec Randall, the former British Minister to the Vatican, whose name would be used in the High Court describing my life-style. But Lonsdale Bryans and Alec Randall had also read the unpublished reports on my life during the war, which clearly show how the public was duped, but gagging writs prevented me from revealing the reports.

Alec Randall and Lonsdale Bryans knew how Dil de Rohan and Frederika Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee appeared frequently as strands in the tapestry of my life and yet both women made a complete fool not only of me but of so many others about the truth of Frederika's war years and their attitude to Jews. Their American mothers both lost fortunes in the Wall Street crash and of course blamed the Jews for it, as having too much influence in international finance. Nevertheless, the mothers remained rich enough to desert their homely Quaker backgrounds for traditional European sophistications such as the acquisition of titles and membership of the Roman Catholic Church. Dil brazenly wrote, 'The Rohans were all hereditary Serene Highnesses which had the one advantage that one went in to dinner in front of some of the good ladies who had been snobbish before our marriage. There

was one house to which I often went simply to annoy the daughter who was a mere highness.' If Dil's boss, Brendan Bracken, thought Lonsdale Bryans a 'stuck-up' Old Etonian, yet of the two men, it was Bracken who sought to disown his humble origins in Ireland, whereas Lonsdale had delighted to tell how his Bryans side of the family could be traced to Francis Bryans the inn-keeper at The Moy in County Tyrone.

But whatever comfort they derived from kissing cardinals' rings at German castles and from admittance to the Royal Enclosure at Ascot, Dil and Frederika kept faith with the American dollar in the form of American bank accounts they both held in contravention of currency restrictions imposed during and after the war. But Dil and Frederika lusted after things money could not buy. Like frustrated children, they resented not 'vulgar' Americans such as Barbara Hutton but those non-heiresses who came to Europe and became international cult figures such as Jane Bowles and Sylvia Plath who possessed the one title that evaded the titled Dil and Frederika, they were, simply, 'writers.'

Elizabeth Montagu had worked on the film **The Last Chance** and Dil at the Ministry of Information thought the film, 'invaluable British propaganda and I wanted it to be shown in every country of the world, and in the end this was achieved.' The lesbian Dil found what she hoped would be another sort of chance as a result of Elizabeth Montagu's marriage to a director of Coleman, Prentice and Varley, a successful advertising agency whose clients included the Conservative Party. A copy-writer in the firm was a German girl called Assia who married a younger, Cambridge undergraduate, David Wevill, the pair becoming friendly with the English poet Ted Hughes and his American wife Sylvia Plath.

The beautiful Assia's green eyes rendered Dil somewhat less than serene and indeed Dil became actively stirred by Assia's boast of using a knife on men who abused or abandoned her, to say nothing of how she vandalised their possessions. The 'annus mirabilis' of the green eyes was 1961, for until then Dil's principal means of assault had been a frying-pan used as a matter of course on such enemies as Sir Francis Rose and with even more ferocity on her live-in-friend Katusha, as the dancer's bruises visibly testified. Assia Wevill meanwhile turned her green eyes on the poetic Ted Hughes, successfully seducing him and producing a daughter, Shura.

Another poet who inspired excesses was T S Eliot whose first wife Vivien, lacking poetic means of expression, pushed parcels of human excreta through Faber and Faber's letter-box, in the belief that her husband's fellow Faber directors were hiding him from her. Before my initiation into the Faber cocktail ritual, Eliot had married his second wife, Valerie, his former secretary, in a solemnisation on 10 January 1957 at St Barnabas Church,

Kensington, followed by a wedding breakfast at a house where Ezra Pound used to live. In 1958, Eliot and Robert Frost finally succeeded with the petitioning of the American Government for Pound's release from a Washington asylum. Pound went back to Italy where his interviews with the Irish author, Patricia Hutchins, took place for **Ezra Pound's Kensington** which Eliot had commissioned. I spent Christmas Day 1961 with Patricia and her poet husband, Robert Greacen, whose aunts had kept our local newspaper shop in 1930s Belfast. In 1948 Robert had also been commissioned by Eliot to be co-editor of the **Faber Book Of Contemporary Irish Verse**, and when I visited him lived with his wife and daughter Arethusa in Pound's former home at 10 Kensington Church Walk.

I usually went to the Faber cocktail parties with Louis MacNeice where Eliot discussed Pound's Kensington and asked me about Kelham priests Eliot and I knew. As a stage priest, the Scottish actor, David Keir, got to know Eliot from the days playing a prelate in **Murder In The Cathedral**. By 1938 Vivien Eliot's behaviour had become so embarrassing that she was certified insane and sent to Northumberland House, a private asylum in North London from which she escaped from time to time. In her pursuit of the adored 'Tom' Mrs Eliot believed she had only to plead and ask forgiveness to restore her husband's love. David Keir, known as 'Little David', liked Vivien and felt sorry for her plight yet knew that her disruption of Eliot's office at Fabers and of his theatrical work could not be tolerated, so when Vivien turned up during an escape Little David sadly had no choice but to phone Eliot and have Vivien returned to Northumberland House.

Adeline de la Feld and her niece Bridget Parsons had been much involved with Sir George and Lady Sitwell and their three literary offspring, one of whom, Dame Edith Sitwell, remarked, 'At some point in their marriage Tom went mad, and promptly certified his wife.' As an early champion of Votes for Women, Adeline was horrified at Vivien's fate and asked me to investigate rumours. Ever since her Uncle Newcastle's death in 1928 Eliot had championed Adeline's family interests such as Kelham and London's High Churches. On inheriting various family fortunes Bridget had sponsored a number of young poets and musicians and kept up with their careers as well as with John Betjeman who had supported her in the law court in 1960. But Betjeman was soon not the only poet defending Bridget's enemies against her bitter recriminations rooted in the 1930s when Bridget did not marry the Duke of Kent but Eliot did marry into the upper-classes. Eliot's brother-in-law, Maurice Haigh Wood, noted wryly, 'I think he bit off more than he could chew. He didn't understand the rules, actually.'

In the battle for Votes for Women Adeline had used any weapon to achieve that end but she certainly did not trust her friend Sylvia Pankhurst

with the Hope diamonds and fortune. She had the Belfast-born Hugh Henderson as her lawyer and another barrister with Ulster connections, Cuthbert Holmes, nephew of Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke, handled her financial affairs. Cuthbert had been close to Geoffrey Faber at Oxford and they made a number of tours together before marrying and having children. From 1949 to his death in 1968, Adeline and I had many meetings with Cuthbert and since Fabers commissioned me to travel all over the world writing books we often raked over the sad ashes of Vivien Eliot's life and the important question as to who had signed the fateful 'reception papers' to have her certified.

We found it difficult to accept Edith Sitwell's version that Eliot himself 'went mad' but since Bridget Parsons and T S Eliot were involved with Lady Cunard when the vicious attack on her, **Black Man And White Ladyship** was launched by Nancy Cunard and Wyn Henderson in Paris we had to accept the fact that not only had Wyn left the Hours Press under a cloud but that Wyn also resented Eliot's take-over of her authors such as Ezra Pound, Wystan Auden and Sam Beckett.

When Louis MacNeice and Eric Ewens had work at their BBC offices, perhaps dealing with visitors from Paris such as Sam Beckett and his friend Barbara Bray, they would take them to a wine bar called Sheriffs where T S Eliot and David Keir went, but Eliot's still-living co-directors from Fabers would usually see Little David at my home. I would certainly not have allowed these meetings over the years had I believed Edith Sitwell's allegation that Eliot 'went mad.'

Eliot's office at Fabers was near my Bloomsbury flat and my literary comings-and-goings were monitored by Wyn Henderson who still regarded herself as the queen of the old Bloomsbury set. Others have referred to Wyn's fascination with men who looked like priests, she falling for the sacerdotal Beckett when she worked on his early work at the Hours Press. Beckett's biographer, Deirdre Bair, wrote of Sam coming to London and meeting one of Eric Ewens's BBC actors Patrick Magee, 'an Irishman fond of whisky and a good story, with a boisterous personality and mellifluous voice that enthralled him. Magee's vibrant energy swept Beckett along without allowing him time to consider his own listlessness.' Beckett became so captivated with Pat Magee that the playwright tailored some of his work to exploit Magee's unique stage presence.

The Irish actor astonished Sam Beckett and everybody else when, despite having glamour stars from both sides of the Atlantic running after him, Pat Magee married a boyhood girlfriend, Belle Sherry, from the next street in Armagh. In **Ulster** I portray Pat's father and friends in Armagh for I was and still am close to the Magee family. I knew that Sam Beckett not only

loved going to spend an evening at Pat's home in Hammersmith where he would listen to Pat's Irish stories by the hour but also to enjoy Belle's company, for she remains the centre of interest to London's Anglo-Irish theatrical community.

In 1961 Louis MacNeice and I were due at a Faber cocktail party in the evening and at a BBC rehearsal in the morning I asked Sam Beckett, as a Faber author, if he was going. Fabers had no idea Beckett was in England and immediately sent an invitation by hand, for whatever Edith Sitwell and others thought, Beckett and Nancy Cunard remained faithful to Eliot. But I soon began to understand why one of Wyn's many lovers, Havelock Ellis, described her as 'dangerous.' Following Dil de Rohan's example, Wyn became a Roman Catholic and with my help found a tenant for her flat while she went off to Cambridge where she fell ill and met the young Dominican monk in hospital. As John Mortimer wrote, 'She made a rapid recovery, left the hospital and in almost no time at all had married the monk.'

But having illegally sub-let her council flat, Wyn and her monk had to adopt extraordinary means to get rid of the tenants I had found for her, and she embroiled Sam Beckett in her scheme since he knew the tenant New Zealand professor. As all this coincided with Fabers' cocktail party Sam did not go to the party after all, particularly as Wyn blamed her poverty on that other American director at Fabers, Morley Kennerley who had rightly stopped Barbara Hutton from buying further paintings and jewels, mostly stolen, being sold by Wyn on Dil de Rohan's behalf. After this Barbara made her disastrous pass at Morley's genitals, though this did not totally surprise anyone for Morley's wife Jean said, 'People perpetually warned me that Barbara Hutton would try to take away my husband.'

Morley Kennerley had much to say about taking husbands away, for at our next meeting the dramatic news of Sylvia Plath's suicide shook a literary Bloomsbury which could be blasé about such things as the Bohemian Assia Wevill trying to out-do the outrageous Nina Hammett who had earlier killed herself. London's early 1960s literary scene already included Ted Hughes's sister Olwyn, a literary agent who Fabers thought should represent my books, though Hughes himself and Sylvia Plath lived in Devon, the poet coming to London with his BBC work. At the end, Sylvia collected her husband's papers and made a bonfire in the moonlit garden, reciting a magical incantation as the flames devoured the writings that had been so precious to her until Assia Wevill appeared.

Sylvia's death upset Elizabeth Smart, author of **By Grand Central Station I Sat Down And Wept**, and mother of four among the poet George Barker's many children. She was into her second pregnancy on joining the Ministry of Information and as she worked there with Dil's enemy Phyllis

Bentley, the novelist, I took care not to be seen with Lizzie Smart in Dil's pub. Dil was not pleased when she heard that I had gone to the next Faber party with Smart, but even without Dil being there, a heated exchange took place with another poet about the death of Sylvia Plath and somehow all three of us ended up in an unseemly mess on the floor. As I left the party somebody struck me on the head with a champagne bottle and I fell bleeding to the ground until an ambulance whisked me off to be stitched up.

As I had a High Court action being heard over the young-man-about-town banging my door with a champagne bottle after Paul Getty's famous Sutton Place party, the police from Gray's Inn Road, mentioned in that court action, were intrigued because over the years so many of Dil de Rohan's friends had been knocked out by champagne bottles when her frying-pan was not at hand. Dil's resort to violence however, found its match in Assia Wevill who in 1969 murdered the daughter, Shura, she bore by Ted Hughes, before killing herself. Bloomsbury's amorous adventures did not always end in such mayhem, and in 1989 a distinguished barrister wrote to me that he knew nothing of events in the early 1960s when his wife and I were obliged to seek the protection of the High Court after coffins arrived in the middle of the night for the barrister's mother-in-law to whom I dedicated a book. Fortunately my solicitor invited me to his office so that he could record my conversation the morning after I left University College Hospital with my head bandaged. In the High Court 14 years later Mr Justice Caulfield refused to strike out my affidavit about the 1960s recorded conversations since he deemed them connected with later attacks on me.

Eventually in 1983 the West Hampstead police did catch up with the man who smashed my 'great Jewish beak' which Dil de Rohan had already threatened to do when the Gray's Inn Road police questioned her over anti-Semitic letters she had sent to me. Halina Melnyk-Kaluzynska organised transport to take the 'great Jewish beak' witnesses, including herself across London to the Crown Court at Wood Green. Countess Frederika enquired in high dudgeon why I did not use her car and why the police had not called her as a witness. Her parting shot was, 'You and Jack Sarch will get nowhere raking up all that muck about the past' meaning the massacre of the Jews.

Frederika and Doris Pillitz both became Roman Catholics and with all their converts' enthusiasm became more devout than the Irish labourers flocking to the local Cricklewood church to which Doris devoted her life, but which the snooty Countess Frederika regarded as somewhat down-market. Doris had offended her rich Jewish family not only by going over to Rome but also by changing her name to Mary Pilgrim, a name demonstrating Doris's humility. But humility was the last quality Countess Frederika Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee displayed as we walked our dogs past Mary Pilgrim's

grave in Hampstead Cemetery. Doris's change of religion had certainly not affected Jack Sarch's respect for her as friend and actress, and whenever he brought visitors to my home he always pointed out the portrait by her sister Hedi Pillitz, painted before Doris became Mary Pilgrim.

Jack Sarch regarded Frederika and Dil de Rohan with suspicion and he and his fellow Jewish lawyers wanted to find out if the two women's nefarious schemings had cost Jewish lives. Certainly everybody loathed Stalin's regime although as Dil pointed out in *How Do You Do?*, by the 1930s she had learnt enough Russian to go to Moscow which welcomed her as the Princess Carlos de Rohan as openly as her friend Baroness Budberg, since exposed as a Russian spy. Dil's connections with highly-placed and influential people in the British Isles and Europe put her in a unique position for selling information to Moura Budberg, for Dil would not think twice about betraying her friends as well as her country if the proceeds would fill her whisky glass.

Certainly no secrecy shrouded the London visit in 1956 of the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet which paid tribute to Catherine Devilliers, Dil's beloved and long-suffering Katusha with whom she had lived openly as a lesbian pair in Berlin at the time when their friends Gertrude Stein and Alice B Toklas were holding court in Paris. Katusha's fame and recognition aroused more jealousy than pride in Dil, who after all figured in a book by her friend Alice B Toklas as no more than a society hostess preparing lettuce washed in seven waters for a poet's lunch, while during her life the only book referring to Dil's wartime exploits was one by me. Dil reacted by using the frying-pan on Katusha and by heaping verbal abuse of the worst kind on Jane Bowles who took Mary Oliver out of Dil's life for seven months.

It was, however, Countess Frederika and her rich tenants in Berlin, who so favoured Lonsdale Bryans's 1940 peace mission aimed at protecting Germany and therefore the rest of Europe from invasion by the Russian hordes. For Frederika and other Jew-haters, a successful peace mission would have prevented the subsequent Holocaust, but if sparing the loathed Jews was the price for defeating the Russians and thereby also saving the Waldburg's scattered castles and estates, then so be it. They had looked to Hitler as a strong man to build a powerful Germany and for years Frederika sent photographs of Nazi leaders she admired to her equally admiring mother. But after so many of Count Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee's friends were murdered in the 1934 Röhm Putsch, doubts crept in, although Countess Frederika and her husband certainly did not flee Germany in 1939 as did Danylo Skoropadsky, even though Frederika's Hampstead friends thought she did.

In January 1992, the lakeside Wannsee Villa will become another Holocaust Memorial to mark the 50th anniversary of the systematic genocide of six million Jews. In his memoirs Professor Haushofer wrote that up until

October 1938 he and 'wise observers' from Britain and elsewhere believed that 'from the teething troubles of National Socialism there might emerge a pacified Central Europe, satisfied for centuries to come, with moderate access to Africa's raw materials.' Then there was that dread word, **Reichskristallnacht - Night of Broken Glass** - when the wholesale slaughter of Jews started.

Was Lonsdale Bryans really a 'wise observer' for the German Resistance to dispatch on such an important mission? Just as his friend Evan Tredegar was aptly called, even by those who liked him, 'the Playboy Poet', so people perceived Lonsdale Bryans as a globe-trotting, amateur diplomat whom the British Foreign Secretary dismissed though it was no great secret that the influential Brendan Bracken behind Winston Churchill had started his own power-game as the play-thing of the Playboy Poet, who dominated Lonsdale Bryans's 'amateur' diplomacy. A British visitor taken seriously by Hitler was the former King Edward VIII yet even he earned contempt from his countrymen for being a globe-trotting playboy admired by Hitler and 'vulgar Americans.'

Louis MacNeice wrote that during his last term at school with Anthony Blunt they went wild 'parodying hymns - every little blasphemy a blow for the Better Life.... We would come back with our arms full of stolen azaleas.' I went similarly wild in childhood and stole flowers from the big houses around Louis's home on the Malone Road while singing such things as 'Hark the herald angels sing Mrs Simpson pinched our King' as I wrote in **No Surrender** until the libel lawyer deleted the lines about Mrs Simpson. I remember our born-again neighbours saying openly it was a good riddance for her to have stopped such a godless creature as Edward VIII from being crowned.

For many years I helped Adeline de la Feld in her family disputes which principally concerned the Hope diamonds and the state of her niece Bridget Parsons's relationship with the royal family. In the final paragraph of her last letter to her Aunt Ad, Bridget wrote on 21 September 1970, 'And I'm certain that you'll agree that the U.S.A. with its ever increasing revolting violence and drug sodden youth isn't far behind.' I knew that nobody was more vitriolic and persistent in their criticism of the former Mrs Simpson as a 'vulgar American' than Bridget Parsons.

Yet before the abdication debacle it was the American Lady Cunard who hoped Bridget would marry Prince George, Duke of Kent, and it was the dowry of Bridget's American great-aunt, Lady Natica Lister-Kaye, which enabled Bridget to play Lady Bountiful to the young poets of the 1960s who took her fancy. And how Bridget loved it when Barbara Hutton bought some family Hope diamonds and considered a proposal of marriage from Bridget's

cousin, Count Manolo Borromeo. Edward VIII's abdication so that he could marry Mrs Simpson changed all that for Bridget overnight.

Bridget's bitterness grew with the years as she realised what a fool she had been not to marry Prince George, the only man she really loved. Bridget told the disappointed matchmaker, Lady Cunard, that she had rejected the proposal through feeling unable to cope with the strain of royal duties. On reading that statement in a Cunard biography her Aunt Ad wrote to me that it was 'the sort of thing Bridget would say' to conceal the real reason. Bridget's 'increasing violence' over the years sprang not only from the marriage to Princess Margaret of the step-nephew she disliked, Lord Snowdon, but of the success Mrs Simpson made of her marriage to the former king. But many people in London society shared Bridget's outrage over her former friends Edward VIII and Mrs Simpson, yet like Bridget, those people had no objection to inheriting fortunes from ancestors who had married American heiresses solely for the size of their dollar fortunes.

The Windsors settled in Paris which, unlike London, could swallow such a controversial couple whole. Life went on, of course, after the Windsors' departure, but it was not a life which brought Bridget Parsons happiness. On 5 May 1943, James Lees-Milne wrote in his subsequently-published diary, 'Instead of being flattered Bridget seems to be affronted by each proposal of marriage she receives. Strange.' But it seemed strange neither to me nor to Bridget's Aunt Ad in whom Bridget confided intimate affairs.

The other young man who had danced with Bridget at Lady Cunard's ballroom was her friend David, the then Prince of Wales, who reserved his proposal for Wallis Simpson of Baltimore, Maryland. Bridget questioned me intensely about her aunt's memoirs. Would Aunt Ad reveal the truth? Yes, even about the great love Adeline had for a Jewish woman who, like Adeline, is now dead, but whose children and grandchildren are alive, and who over the years entertained Adeline and me at their homes and after she died kept in touch with me over Adeline's sensitive papers.

One of my Bloomsbury neighbours in the 1960s was the writer Richard Whittington-Egan, co-author of **The Life And Letters of Richard Le Gallienne** which infuriated The Baron for the book disclosed that she, Gwen Le Gallienne, was only the poet's step-daughter. The book also went over press scandals about Gwen's real father, Roland Perry, the American sculptor and painter with an international reputation for producing such works as the statue of Dr Benjamin Rush in Washington and the frieze of the New Amsterdam Theatre in New York. Wallis Simpson knew a great deal about Roland Perry's work across the United States as well as the sex scandals surrounding his private life, and while honeymooning as the Duchess of

Windsor at the home of the American Ambassador to France, Bill Bullitt, she compared notes with the ambassador's beautiful wife, Louise Bryant, so adored by Gwen Le Gallienne with such disastrous consequences.

Eventually Gwen found a mainstay for her life in Elizabeth Sprigge, the author and theatre director who allowed Gwen a room as a studio where I and others went to pose with glasses in our hands. One day in 1968 Bridget phoned me with news that La Sprigge had discovered that Gwen had sold some of their correspondence to an American researching books, and Sprigge had turned the old Baron out of the house. Bridget's own drinking habits had got so out of hand that she simply could not have such a huge drunk as The Baron monopolising her flat and drinks cupboard. The Social Security people found Gwen a good hotel room where Bridget sent a bottle of whisky and I took food and removed the legs of the bed to stop The Baron from falling out. As the night wore on and after many tears into the whisky glass, Gwen turned to Bridget's sad life. After over thirty years it seemed Bridget had at last calmed down about the Duchess of Windsor.

The following week I flew to Vancouver Island to take the 87 year old Adeline on holiday and I told her of our hopes that Bridget's bitterness might be on the wane. But Adeline waited until Bridget died before writing the story of her niece's life called *The Transforming Power Of Love*. Adeline noted, 'Poor, darling Bridget is the latest tragic victim of the stupid secrecy and lack of love, as my poor mother was of an earlier generation. Bridget in her unhappy state felt herself alone, unwanted, unloved, gave way to unredeemed despair. Then into this unrelieved dark appeared an angel of light, Yvonne as housekeeper, cook, companion, who realised the fund of loving unrecognised goodness in her and lavished care and affection and understanding on her so that Bridget recognised for the first time in her life the power of real love and a sense of happiness never before. As Yvonne, wrote to me after Bridget's sudden end, she had happy plans for the future.'

The spy-catchers who interviewed me were concerned with Queen Mary's kleptomania which included shop-lifting at Harrods. I could not confirm that the Queen might have passed some of this stolen property to her friends the Duchess of Newcastle and Adeline de la Feld since Queen Mary's relics at Forest Farm which I had to deal with, and which Bridget's nephew, Lord Rosse, carefully listed in his letters to me before delivering the effects to the royal family, were much too big to have fitted into Queen Mary's shopping-bag.

But nobody can deny the claim in the published letters of Madame Suzanne Blum, the Duchess of Windsor's Paris lawyer, such as that of 24 March 1979, 'How can you still believe what you read in the newspapers? The Duchess did not give away the Duke's files: they were taken away without her

knowledge.' The general belief is that Lord Mountbatten went to Paris on behalf of the present Queen Elizabeth II and removed the sensitive Windsor files.

Edwina Mountbatten's biographer, Richard Hough, stated that Edwina 'enjoyed particularly the company of Nada, who had lesbian inclinations and whose marriage to George Milford Haven was no longer completely happy or fulfilled, and they were often seen together alone. These two young, rich and privileged women had married brothers.' Lady Nada Milford Haven's homosexual affairs were hardly sub-rosa since the *Sunday Times* gave prominent space to her part in a New York trial when Judge O'Brien demanded full details about a British royal family person being in bed with Dil de Rohan's lesbian lover who was, incidentally, the Duchess of Windsor's friend.

The Mountbattens had a famous house in Park Lane close to the flat in Grosvenor House where Claude Soman gave his notorious 'pyjama parties.' Paris-born Jack Sarch loved the French language as did his fellow-Jew, Claude Soman, who spent years in Paris and Berlin as a cameraman before settling in Britain during the war to make government propaganda films like his friend Noel Coward. Claude gave the extraordinary entertainments in Grosvenor House as he had done everywhere he lived, and his Park Lane flat was lined with photographs of his young daughter presenting bouquets to Queen Mary and other royals arriving at Claude's theatres.

Small and fat when I met him during the war, Claude had little hair on top which perhaps led to his fetish of pulling, and sometimes snipping with scissors the hair of anybody, male or female, which was thick. A business associate, Robert Strauss, known as the Whip Baron, had an estate in Sussex which produced vegetables for a smart restaurant a few doors away from Jack Bryans's house. Claude Soman loved giving dinner parties at the restaurant when he would get down under the long tablecloth to find out which of the women were following Edwina Mountbatten's example by not wearing knickers. Claude had an interest in a taxi company and allowed no guests to drive which was just as well after the wining that went with the dining, so the chauffeurs would convey us in their cars to Grosvenor House for the pyjama parties to conclude a thoroughly decadent evening.

In 1948 I became Scout Master at Clayesmore Junior School and Claude duly demanded my appearance as such at Grosvenor House when old friends from Paris swelled the large party. All his life he seemed to have known everything about everybody including the Windsors, Evan Tredegar and Lonsdale Bryans. Claude had another Scout Master to his parties, Edouard Pfeiffer, who had been Secretary General of the unlikely-sounding Right-wing Radical Socialist Party, and described by Goronwy Rees as 'a

peculiarly detestable Frenchman who seemed to me to smell of every kind of corruption.' A whiff of the detestable hung about the aptly nicknamed 'Gonorrhoea' Rees himself as he declined into being a bore addicted to living in the past and to endless paranoid speculations about who led the plot which dislodged him as Principal of the University of Wales at Aberystwyth.

Rees had burnt his boats in 1956 and until he died in 1979 he never stopped condemning Cambridge spies, especially Anthony Blunt. Even when he spent his last years as a tenant of the Armitage family at Strand-on-the-Green, he never got invitations from Ruth Armitage and me to our parties and Saturday-night dinners attended by his old friends Eileen Cullen and Ursula Eason of the BBC. Rees could have enlarged upon the Welsh writers Dylan Thomas and Billy Gruffydd, but that would have entailed Rees admitting that he too had gone to sherry and princesses with Evan Tredegar, the Playboy Poet, and to strawberry teas on the terrace of the House of Commons with Village Stallion Gruffydd before the actresses left for Claude Soman's latest import from Broadway.

As a child I had been scarred like Adeline de la Feld and her niece Bridget Parsons by the secrecy syndrome. Keeping the secret password of my Orange Lodge was nothing compared with the fear of neighbours discovering that my mother was a bastard and worse, possibly, one produced by a Jewish money-lender. But even my secrets paled beside Henry Lynch-Robinson's, for his father, a leading member of a Protestant government would be disgraced and ruined if it became known that he was concealing the fact that his wife, Henry's mother, belonged to the Church of Rome. Claude Soman held such hypocrisy and secrecy in contempt, and indulged his excesses openly and fearlessly. I admired him for daring to bring, and for feeling obliged on principle to bring, to the British stage those American plays such as **Tobacco Road** that so shocked yet delighted 1940s audiences.

Despite indiscretions with women, Goronwy Rees nevertheless remained a devoted family man, and as he took care to point out in his autobiography, and in interviews to spy-catching authors, he never went to any homosexual orgies but believed Guy Burgess's account of them, as presumably also to be believed are the published accounts of Edouard Pfeiffer playing ping-pong with a naked young cyclist serving as the net while 'a group of men in full evening dress' looked on.

However much Evan Tredegar and Lonsdale Bryans adored donning evening wear to accompany the Prince of Wales to the opera, they would not have worn such clothes to Paris parties where Evan's hostess was often Nina Hamnett, outrageous and determined pleasure seeker...the legendary queen of Bohemian life in Paris and London,' to quote the jacket of her book **Laughing Torso**. Evan encouraged rather than threatened outrageous people

to write of his bizarre life-style with Aleister Crowley and Francis Rose. Nobody read of these events more avidly than Evan's protege, Brendan Bracken, and C E Lysaght said in his biography of Brendan, 'Clementine Churchill noted with approval that Bracken had become "ever so respectable" and was no longer the irresponsible maverick she had once tried to ban from her house.'

Mrs Churchill wanted to protect her young son Randolph from the corrupting influence of such a dissident, but Randolph himself became a political maverick no constituency wanted when he wrote Brendan's obituary in the **Evening Standard**, 'Man of mystery, a secretive eccentric, a wonderful friend, a freak, perhaps a genius, certainly an expert in the art of make-believe and fantasy; such was Lord Bracken whom I first met at Chartwell when I was eleven years old.'

From the other side of the political fence, Clement Attlee had said of Bracken, 'This man is not fit to be a minister in the middle of a war.' Brendan had done his globe-trotting not only with Evan Tredegar and Lonsdale Bryans but also with Lord Farrington, described by Hugh Dalton as 'a pansy pacifist of whose private tendencies it might be slander to speak freely.'

Brendan Bracken was a very young man indeed, still under Evan's influence in 1924, when he wrote in **English Life**, 'No good purpose can be served by the re-hash of tittle-tattle about living people which a writer in a contemporary publication has attributed to the late Lord Morley. After his death the public are treated to a choice selection of some very rash judgements uttered by his lordship after a lunch with some of his radical friends...It is a fact that in his will he forbade any account of his life to be written...we now have gentlemen who write gossip from the morgue.'

Bracken's first biographer, Andrew Boyle, faced difficulty for both Brendan and Evan had destroyed their papers and for obvious reasons. When he first came to see me in 1979, Boyle brought a sheaf of press cuttings by John Francis who had dared in print to quote me saying, 'My life's mistake seems to be that I did not join Burgess and Blunt in 1944 in spying for the Russians.' No action was taken against John Francis, but the unfortunate Boyle was hastily summoned to Whitehall about my statements to the press and letters to Peter Montgomery used by **Private Eye** to expose Anthony Blunt. Boyle told a colleague, A N Wilson, what happened, and only after Boyle's death did Wilson disclose in the **Evening Standard**, the threat made on Boyle's life in 1979.

The **Daily Telegraph** wrote of Blunt's amnesty offered in 1964, 'What particularly stuck in Boyle's gullet was that George Blake, who boasted no establishment connections, had received 42 years for his treachery.' During the war Boyle served with Military Intelligence and was familiar with the

Wednesday Society's backing for the German Resistance movement which sent Lonsdale Bryans on a peace mission to England in 1940. Wolf Rudiger Hess correctly claims that Lonsdale Bryans had 'loose contacts' with Foreign Secretary Halifax, but at one stage Lonsdale had very strong contacts with Brendan Bracken for whose Ministry of Information Dil de Rohan used both Lonsdale Bryans and myself before passing on our intelligence to the beloved drinking companion, Baroness Budberg. Stalin knew the baroness personally but it was the Queen Mother and her family who continued to share the royal box at Covent Garden with Anthony Blunt even after 1964 when the Queen learnt of her Surveyor of Pictures being a Russian spy.

Following the British and American governments' embargoes on the Hess papers, many people have written about their experience of the Deputy Führer, including in 1984 his wife Ilse who acted as his English interpreter from 1933 and took important British visitors to receptions, such as her frequent visits to the 1936 Olympic Games with Sir Robert Vansittart, Permanent Under Secretary at The Foreign Office who had become Chief Diplomatic Adviser to Lord Halifax when Lonsdale Bryans presented his proposals on behalf of the German Resistance. Vansittart's widow, Lady Sarita, had earlier been the wife of the Rt Hon Sir Colville Adrian de Rune Barclay of the banking family and she spent her old age in Paddington near Anthony Blunt's flat, although after 1979 Blunt was no longer welcome. In 1965 Barclays Bank had been particularly helpful to Anthony Blunt in solving a problem over which Whitehall later threatened Andrew Boyle, telling him not to write about it in the revised edition of *The Climate Of Treason*, because the illegal activities of still-living diplomats would consequently be exposed.

Acting as counsel for others involved in that problem, Jack Sarch gleaned from the papers he took into court that a cover-up was in place, largely to do with Lonsdale Bryans and the Vansittarts in Berlin during the 1936 Olympic Games. Fortunately not all were afraid to talk to Jack who in any event did not seek 'gossip from the morgue' since nobody could restore the gold fillings wrenched from the mouths of gas-chamber victims.

As a schoolboy going down The Bishop's Avenue, Jack loved waving to Ruth Daniels at Wacousta in hopes of hearing about her next private concert at which so many of his friends played and sang. Jack and Ruth were both interested in the child genius, Shulamith Shafir, who came from Palestine to play the piano and be painted by Hedi Pillitz. After the portrait had been exhibited at the Royal Institute of Painters in Oil and reproduced in the *Studio* magazine, it disappeared.

At the beginning of the Second World War Mr and Mrs Daniels sent their most valuable furniture and paintings to their estate in High Wycombe

and not much came back in 1945. There had been insurance claims but Mr and Mrs Daniels worried much more about their only daughter's bouts of depression which improved neither with the sherry-slugging nor with Ruth's love life which led her to several suicide attempts. The family had a good confidant in Harry Auger, their gardener who had his own house in Wacousta's extensive grounds as well as the greenhouses where he cultivated amazing flowering cacti which appeared as illustrations in his specialist book on the subject.

After Ruth Daniels died, Harry took a flat in Halina Melnyk-Kaluzynska's house which had to be fitted with steel grilles at its windows and doors since Harry owned valuable china and silver, as did his brother who was murdered by a robber. I saw Harry most days when I collected the dogs and we occasionally ate together. Although he had given up exhibiting cacti he still collected rare china. Some of the Wacousta squatters recognised Harry as the former factotum to Ruth Daniels and me as Jack Sarch's client in court appearances over anti-Semitism. I knew that the abandoned Gothic house had become a Gothic nightmare to the neighbouring oil sheiks because of the squatters' drugs and sex and vandalism, but even the Sultan of Brunei's sister, Princess Norhayati, shocked The Bishop's Avenue with allegations during a court case that she humiliated her servants.

The sad life story of Ruth Daniels and her flight from the 21st birthday party gave the squatters great satisfaction and they planned to mock the 21st birthday party by inviting another 300 guests to what the police later described as an orgy of 'sex and destruction' which wrecked vengeance on the departed but still-hated capitalists, the Daniels family. I was not surprised to read the *Evening Standard* headline, 'I saw Hippy Plan Orgy at Mansion.' The burning of Manderley in Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* was not more dramatic than the end of Wacousta. When the fire brigade finally brought the blaze under control they saw a bizarre version of Frank Sinatra's *My Way* written on the kitchen wall by the squatters, 'And now the end is near / And so we face the final excursion / To you, the wally rich / We state our case / Of which we're certain / We came, we saw, we liked / And so we stayed, not just because we rule the world / We did it our way.'

The Bishop's Avenue was laid out in 1887 on what had been part of the Bishop of London's hunting ground. By the 1930s it had become such a showpiece of ostentatious wealth and vulgarity that it was dubbed 'Millionaires Row.' The squatters at Wacousta were class-war anarchists fanatically devoted to destruction of capitalism in general and individual capitalists and property in particular, Wacousta being an opportunity not to be missed of showing the world 'their way,' a way many people thought similar to Hitler's of persecuting rich Jews in the 1930s, egged on by such people as Countess

Frederika Waldburg-Wolfegg-Waldsee who, so ironically, settled among Hampstead Jews who had fled from the Nazis before the war.

An early developer of The Bishop's Avenue was Sir John Glover who built suitably large houses there and nearby for his sons who aspired to such positions as Chairman of the Baltic Mercantile and Shipping Exchange. Long before the Daniels family deserted their American orange groves, Miss Belle Pearce had moved her Blüthner into one of her grandfather Glover's properties which I only got to visit after her sister, Mrs Kathleen Knight, was widowed in the 1950s and returned to Hampstead. The elderly sisters shared a family house in one of London's last private and unpaved roads close to The Bishop's Avenue, but did not share the same table for the deaf Mrs Knight had played hostess too long in her delightful Chelsea home to take second place at Hampstead, so Miss Pearce kept her separate establishment upstairs.

In December 1965 I had dinner with Mrs Knight and her son Christopher, and Miss Pearce displeased her sister by coming downstairs ostensibly to consult the **Radio Times** but actually, as Mrs Knight pointed out in her fortissimo deaf-person's voice, 'She's only come down to look at you Robin,' at which an embarrassed Miss Pearce quickly retreated. We talked of our mutual Belfast acquaintances such as Henry Lynch-Robinson and Alfred Arnold who had turned up in Hampstead to see their actress friend, Jean Hamilton, sister of Forrest Reid's long-vanished Kenneth, who had married Mrs Knight's eldest son Humphrey. But for years Jean, like Ruth Daniels, took firstly to the bottle and lastly her own life.

Mrs Knight wanted to be alone at dinner with Christopher and me because I was expecting my nightly phone call from Anthony Blunt about Christopher's colleague who had gone missing, presumably following Kim Philby to Russia. Blunt duly rang and in high spirits said that Barclays Bank had told him and the Foreign Office that the missing person had cashed a traveller's cheque in Rotterdam, so after three months obviously had not reached Moscow. Blunt added that he had already told 'Sarita', meaning Lady Vansittart, whose son by her first marriage was the 14th Barclay baronet. The Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures was elated by his latest exercise in espionage, and I certainly lacked the malice required to deflate him by telling him that the person who disappeared had written a spoof successfully designed to make a fool of Blunt.

I much admired Mrs Knight's blunt talk which resembled that of her cousin, Alice Pethybridge, whom I had known in South Wales and who, on hearing of my problems with a married woman, observed drily that I should have been like her brother Willie, 'and kept to boys.' It seemed as if Alice would never get an obituary in **The Times**, but eventually she did, on 27 August 1969, 'Miss Alice Pethybridge, a former Lady Mayoress of Cardiff,

has died at the age of 103.' Mrs Knight was not quite so old when she went into hospital and on being asked anxiously by a relation what ailed her, replied, 'I need a man in my bed.'

Jack Sarch had known The Bishop's Avenue set since boyhood and as a barrister became one of the experts who traced stolen property and how it was smuggled in and out of England. No case at the Old Bailey and elsewhere was trivial to him since if a pair of diamond earrings was involved they might prove to be part of the haul Barbara Hutton claimed she had lost, or if the case involved a picture it might turn out to be a Picasso drawing appropriated by Dil de Rohan from Francis Rose after non-payment of his rent or her blackmail demands.

Jack's eyes lit up when I came from Camden Lock market having found the Hedi Pillitz portrait of the schoolgirl painist Shulamith Shafir which had been lost for many years. But no police charges resulted from the find. In a biography of Brendan Bracken I read his 1956 letter to W S Robinson about Miss Rachel Parsons, 'a lady of vast wealth' being murdered by one of the people she 'employed to guard her crumbling house.' Rachel Parsons left no will and as she had no living brothers or sisters, the 'vast wealth' went to already-rich cousins such as Bridget Parsons.

The eccentric Rachel Parsons in the house noted as crumbling by Bracken had 'no expenditure save on horses, eggs and a gas-ring' as well as a number of good friends who unlike her rich relations did not mock her country ways. Adeline de la Feld and I thought it outrageous that one of Rachel's enemies and scoffers benefitted because she died intestate while her animal-loving friends who also loved the odd ways at the crumbling house got nothing, not, of course, that they wanted or expected anything because they assumed, as I did, that the money would go to a home for retired horses on the Isle of Wight. In 1953 I had successfully approached both Adeline and Rachel for money to buy Mary, the last horse owned by British Rail at Paddington Station, so that we could send the old mare to spend her last days happily on the island.

Jack Sarch and I knew other cases of old people dying without making a will and their servants, friends or lovers getting nothing after years of devotion and unpaid nursing. Could those left behind be blamed for helping themselves when the law would not help them to the pictures and jewels they had shared with the now-dead simply because no will protected their interest? Barbara Hutton had been milked of her fortune before she died by a series of playboys and gigolos, and the ties of blood rather than love ensured that Rachel Parsons's fortune went to her cousins. Adeline de la Feld had other plans, however, and she saw to it that a friend as well as the Isle of Wight animal sanctuary got something.

Adeline had early rebelled against Family Places because family fortunes were tied to the eldest male heir, often with no provision for daughters, as in her own case, proof, as she saw it, of her father's resentment because she was not a boy. That bitter experience in youth formed her resolute attitude later in life to injustice and led to her angry impatience with such ridiculous notions that only practising male homosexuals can be geniuses. But there can be ill-feeling between lovers as well as in families.

Adeline's American aunt, Lady Natica Lister-Kaye, had introduced her to London society and to the aunt's friend Lady Cunard in whose ballroom Adeline's niece Bridget Parsons so adored being the favourite of Prince George of Kent and so resented Wallis Simpson stealing the Prince of Wales. But at weekends Lady Cunard whisked her society circus away to South Wales to be entertained by Evan Tredegar's black mass. **The Protege** amused Adeline when she read, 'shades of Evan who loved things in threes and who left a residue of his millions to Buckfast Abbey monks so that they would say a Mass once every seven days for seven years after his death.'

Young men had been willing to follow Evan into the Roman Catholic Church as well as to the altar for flagellation as live tableaux of Christ-at-the-Pillar. But they felt disappointed and as bitter as Dil de Rohan on learning by default that Evan's will left them nothing from his vast estate. It was Adeline who took out her cheque-book and remembered that her sister, Flo Vaughan, had sold her portion of the Hope diamonds long before the Second World War to finance Evan's Catholic causes in Wales, but equally Adeline never forgot that my troubles started when Evan changed his mind as well as his will.

Mrs Mabel Wills, of course, would not have anything at all in Lanson House at Barry that came from Evan whom she loathed, hence why the old man got the sable-lined coat Evan gave me before the flurry of lawyers' letters over it and before the 'better coat' turned up, meaning a mink-lined one to replace it, episodes which found their way into **The House on The Sand**. My lampoon on 'The Boys at The Pakenham,' ran, 'And now I'm beginning to think/ Wrapped up in my sable and mink/ I can weather life's storm/ And keep my love warm...' I should not have been surprised that Evan's parting gesture after our unforeseen encounter in Paris was to spit in my face. I had dared to laugh at the great Lord Tredegar who had not turned a hair when young men committed suicide after Evan tired of their fun-and-games with whips and handcuffs.

When Adeline came to London from Canada in 1953, Bridget Parsons took us with justifiable pride to the Deptford Institute which had much improved in the fifteen years Bridget had taken over from her Aunt Adeline as the family trustee. For a thank-you present Bridget chose a piece from

Adeline's Hope jewels and when, years later she gave the bracelet to a friend, her brother Lord Rosse was furious, but his Aunt Adeline in turn gave him the sharp edge of her tongue. Michael Rosse regarded Adeline's Hope jewels as family heirlooms which should pass to him as being the only one in the family with titled heirs to own the famous jewels in the future. But in this, Lord Rosse showed that he completely under-estimated Adeline's commitment to women's rights, which she had displayed so determinedly in the long-ago battle over Votes for Women. She had given Bridget the bracelet as a reward for years of selfless hard work at the institute, and not as her niece.

Adeline insisted that Bridget had the right to give the jewelry away, as she herself did, for Adeline too had worked hard for her ownership of the Hope diamonds. For years she patiently ferried her Uncle Newcastle to and from Radley Council meetings, and from one Doria palace to the next equally vast villa because nothing must keep his duchess wife from the hunting season or from showing her Clumber spaniels. Being a lady, Adeline of course could not be paid a salary, so over many years she had been given Hope jewelry on her birthday and at Christmas. But to end once and for all the possibility of further lawsuits over her property, in 1967 Adeline sent to auction every remaining piece of her historic Hope jewelry.

She still rebelled against the tyranny of 'damn Family Places,' and increasingly disapproved of many things her nephew, Michael Rosse, did and said, in order to keep up with his step-daughter-in-law, Princess Margaret. Adeline's attitude was that if he wanted her Hope diamonds as 'family heirlooms' he could go to Christies and bid for them like anybody else. Nevertheless, I wondered if some last straw on the camel's back had prompted her final and irreversible decision to be rid of her Hope jewels. Was it because Michael Rosse had disputed his sister Bridget's right to give the Hope bracelet away? Possibly, because later, Adeline's final row with Rosse resulted from his illegal interference with Bridget's will, when Jack Sarch was consulted as counsel.

When I returned to Canada in 1967 and found Adeline at the tea-table with her adviser, Major Cuthbert Holmes, I was amazed to see her wearing her favourite Hope brooch on her blouse in exactly the same way as I had known it for years, yet I had taken it to Christies in London. Adeline explained later that she got a jeweller to copy the original but without the Hope stones, and in fact paid more for it than the Hope original fetched at the auction. Nor was that all. Adeline thought that Michael Rosse treated his sister's estate so badly that on 17 January 1975 Adeline made a new will in which Rosse was totally disinherited and replaced by 'my great-nephew General Conte Paolo de la Feld of Verona Italy.'

The general's wife got a 'Gold bracelet with 3 emeralds and 5 diamonds'

and two brooches, a necklace, a gold wrist-watch and a diamond bracelet which I knew well. Only when Adeline's friend and Canadian trustee, John Nation, got his wife Dagmar to pack up Adeline's last papers to send me did I notice a number of press cuttings Adeline had kept about the curse of the Hope diamond in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington. Christies in London knew the Hope estate well and while I was there in 1967 I saw that Albert Middlemiss still had on his office wall the large framed photograph of the 1949 sale of diamonds by Adeline's aunt, the Duchess of Newcastle, Oscar Wilde's 'My Duchess.' Christie's catalogue divided Adeline's jewels into four parts and only those authenticated as Hope diamonds were listed in the lots as coming from the Hope estate.

So none of the diamonds in Adeline's will were Hope gems in any event and she bequeathed the remaining ones to a much-loved great-niece by marriage who never formed part of the lawsuits over the real Hope jewels. Apart from her jewels, Adeline had an annuity from the estate of her American aunt, Lady Natica Lister-Kaye, who on marriage got a dowry of jewels and cash in 1881 from her father, Don Antonio Yznaga del Valle of New York. It was the childless Natica's jewels which Adeline kept to the end, bequeathing them to Countess Paola de la Feld.

On hearing the result of the sale at Christies, Adeline wrote to me, 'After my life-time experience of lawyers, trustees and the like it is an **immense** relief to know that this one clause of my will can be fulfilled during my life-time. All this is made possible because of your unparalleled generosity. It is an end, a final parting. I can realise what my mother felt that morning when she handed me the Anastasius pearls and diamonds...She was so sadly and tragically misunderstood. The lack of communication between her and her children was abysmal. Her fault in a way, because of the "secrets" which, as you will find in **My Zapiski**, were a stupid offence to me. What I must admit about those unhappy Pelham-Clinton-Hopes is they were so unintelligent. They remained in a state of childhood. I'm afraid I have been at times too bitter in my recollections of the family. But they all contributed so much to my unhappiness.'

Adeline had adored wearing the Anastasius pearls because Thomas Hope had bought them with the international proceeds from his best-selling novel **Anastasius** which appeared in 1819. So the pearls had no connection with the French crown jewels acquired by Thomas Hope and his family, the most famous of those bearing the Hope name being the 44.5 carat blue stone now with a circlet and chain of 52 white diamonds in the Smithsonian Institute today.

The Hope diamond in Washington is a big attraction to visitors but Thomas Hope's reputation as the richest man in Europe remains alive and well

In England where visitors of another sort have been attracted to his mausoleum near Dorking in Surrey. In 1810 the French painter Antoine Dubost caricatured the ugly Thomas Hope and Hope's wife Louisa as 'Beauty and the Beast,' depicting Hope luring her into a marriage of convenience with his famous **Jewels**. The Prince of Wales and the cream of society went to laugh at the picture for they all knew Hope loved the beautiful Greek sailor Aidé, while Louise was in love with her cousin Field Marshal Beresford whom she would eventually marry when Hope died.

Nevertheless, the marriage of convenience produced a fine family and when the second son, Charles, fell ill in Italy during 1817 he was attended by Lord Byron's madcap travelling doctor, the 22 year old John Polidori and others. The Countess Granville wrote 'They say he was killed by seven Italian physicians. There is death in the very sound.' Thomas Hope never got over it, and brought the body of the seven year old Charles back to his country home, the Deepdene in Surrey, and built there a family mausoleum where his little son lay alone for some years among the decorations in gold like a pharaoh.

In 1831 the remains of Thomas Hope himself were placed beside those of young Charles to be followed by other members of the Hope family from the Newcastle descendants. Adeline's mother had spent some years of her girlhood at the Deepdene and loved to light candles and say prayers in the mausoleum. It was a family shrine as important to her as the chapel at Clumber.

Because the blue Hope diamond in the Smithsonian Institute was stolen from an Indian temple, and Thomas Hope's finest classical sculpture was likewise plundered from Greek and Roman tombs and temples, 20th century grave-robbers considered the Deepdene mausoleum as fair game. In fact, so many robbers have tried to break-in after the diamonds reputed to be buried with Thomas Hope, that in 1957 the mausoleum was permanently sealed and buried in earth to roof level.

Much of Thomas Hope's pictures and the celebrated Regency furniture he designed in Neo-Classical styles went to royal residences such as the Royal Pavilion in Brighton where Mr and Mrs Thomas Hope had danced and where the Prince Regent's wards or bastards, the three Balcombe brothers, had lived. The Balcombe and Hope families remained friends and when the astonishing Regent Cinema was built in Brighton during the 1920s, William Balcombe and his fellow-artists painted the murals while two enormous candelabra designed by Thomas Hope appeared in the foyer as suggested by Adeline de la Feld.

By now Adeline and her mother had become seriously involved in the Byzantine Church and hoped to see it united with their own Anglican High

Church. So William Balcombe made an oil painting of St Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine the Great who is said to have discovered the true cross of Christ in honour of which she founded the Church of the Holy Sepulchre before her own death in AD327. William Balcombe's painting shows St Helena carrying a jewel casket containing a relic of the true cross. He also designed her elaborate robe while the saint's jewelry may have been lent, like the casket, by Adeline's mother. The model for this St Helena was the artist's wife, Emily who until her death in 1979 gave the picture pride of place in her Brighton home when it went to their son George.

In the 1980s George Balcombe gave up teaching architecture to work full time on musical commissions. One of his composition students, Daniel Schorno from Switzerland, asked me to write a libretto for an opera about Thomas Hope and we went to see the latest attempt by grave-robbers to get into the Hope mausoleum. First we had coffee with Doris Mercer who occupies one of the many houses on what was the Deepdene's garden. The Surrey Archaeological Collections had asked her to write the Deepdene's history 'through six centuries,' and I was interested to read in it, 'To his widow, Henry Hope left all his possessions, including the Deepdene and the famous Hope diamond which with other jewels became his after bitter family quarrels.'

For a long time the Hope diamond had been inset in the brow of an Indian religious figure until thieves prised it out during the 1640s and smuggled it away from the temple. Sapphire-blue diamonds from India had always been the joy of kings and queens, their rarity making them as valuable as their beauty. Louis XIV acquired one for the French crown jewels which later became the favourite of Marie Antoinette. In 1792, the large diamond was stolen, a matter of months before that unfortunate queen lost her head. During more than twenty years of Marie Antoinette's reign with her husband, Thomas Hope had amassed many diamonds and in 1830 a 44 1/2 carat blue diamond appeared on the market which Thomas Hope knew at once to be cut from the much-larger and stolen Marie Antoinette gem. Age and infirmity prevented him from going personally to buy the still-astonishing diamond, so his eldest son, Henry, the political friend of Disraeli, went instead to buy it on Thomas Hope's behalf.

Thomas died only a few months later, but first the writer Marie Edgeworth paid a last visit to the Deepdene when Hope made a remark she wrote down, 'I am happy Blest with such a wife and such a son.' Although old, Thomas Hope was not an old fool. He remembered the insults about his young protegee, the Greek sailor Aidé, and how his wife's cousin, Field Marshal Lord Beresford, was always waiting in the wings for her, so Thomas only left his widow a life interest in the Deepdene and its contents, or £12,000 if she

remarried which she quickly did to her waiting cousin William, the field marshal. So the Deepdene and its contents went to the eldest son Henry. But his brothers contested the will on the grounds that Henry had not bought Marie Antoinette's diamond for himself but for their father so that they therefore had a share in the diamond. Doris Mercer aptly refers to these 'bitter family quarrels.'

Henry Hope won the law case and that was why, 135 years later, without any prompting from me, Christies automatically stated on their **Important Jewels** catalogue of 24 May 1967 that the gems were 'The Property of the Countess de la Feld. The Following Lots were all from the Henry Hope Estate.'

In 1920 the Deepdene became an hotel and the background of a film **Lloyd The C.I.D.** about a necklace from Tutankhamun's tomb being stolen from its English owner. In August 1931 the Deepdene Hotel was leased to Peter Mazzina and Arthur Giordano, two young men financed, willingly or perhaps unwillingly, by Maundy Gregory who not only made his money by selling honours for the Liberal Party, but who also founded the Anglo-Ukrainian Council supported by Evan Tredegar and Lonsdale Bryans, the funds of which Gregory diverted to pay his homosexual blackmailers. Evan, however, liked having Peter Mazzina and Arthur Giordano around Dorking because although Evan's principal seat was Tredegar Park in South Wales, when he was not in Paris or Rome, China or Brazil, his home was officially Honeywood House, Oakwood Hill, Dorking. Here Evan and Henry Maxwell had their dark room for developing photographs of the sort that so affronted Queen Mary.

A fly in this 1930s Dorking ointment appeared in the form of Louis Tufnell who became extremely jealous at the favours handed out to his rivals, Peter Mazzina and Arthur Giordano at the Deepdene Hotel, because those favours included money which he, Louis Tufnell, had collected by the sweat of his brow for the Anglo-Ukrainian Council, with the object of restoring Prince Paul Skoropadsky as Hetman of the Ukraine. Others, however, knew the sweat to have been wits used to fleece a gullible public. The lawsuit came up in the King's Division of the High Court in 1933. But just as Mr Justice Wills had prevented the jury at Oscar Wilde's trial from hearing how the Prince of Wales had personally hauled Lord Queensberry off the Foreign Secretary whom Queensberry was about to horse-whip over homosexual claims, so Louis Tufnell was not allowed to tell how the close friend of another Prince of Wales, Lord Tredegar, and his young men celebrated the black mass near the Deepdene Hotel in the mausoleum built by Thomas Hope who gained international fame as the author of *Anastasis*. In the novel, the young man Anastasis tells stories of strange deaths he encountered as a

traveller who, of course, was Thomas Hope himself.

Many people awaited the result of the case against Prince Skoropadsky with considerable anxiety and trembled when they thought how much scandal might come out, one of the tremblers being Brendan Bracken, by now a well-established MP and Winston Churchill's right-hand man. Three years before the trial, Churchill had written in *My Early Life*, 'I paid frequent visits to Deepdene with its comfort and splendour' and on one occasion kept the Prince of Wales waiting twenty minutes for dinner. The future Edward VII was so superstitious about the number thirteen that he refused to sit down until the fourteenth guest, Churchill, arrived after asking the people in his train carriage to look away while he changed into evening wear.

Brendan Bracken never met Rachel Parsons though he wrote about her murder, but he did know Desmond Parsons as a fellow-protege of Evan Tredegar and in view of what went on during the black mass, Bracken understood why Adeline wanted Desmond to leave the Cunard/ Tredegar set and go to China. Adeline wrote of her nephew, 'Philosophically accepting the fact that he was unlucky, he felt frustrated and unfairly treated when, on the false and ridiculous accusation that he was weak of character and sure to make bad friends, he was not allowed to go to Oxford.'

If Desmond was prevented from going with Evan Tredegar to visit the house in Germany shared by Francis Rose and Ernst Röhm, he, like Rose, did go to China. But Desmond had been such a successful young man about town that his sudden death in 1937 was the 'only shadow cast' on Cecil Beaton's famous 'fête champêtre.' Adeline resented Evan Tredegar and his friends' accusation that she had sent Desmond to his death because she had financed the fatal trip to China. Packing some of her Hope diamonds, Adeline left England in 1937 and died there in 1975, watched by John Nation's family. As an executive of her Canadian estate, John wrote to me on 26 February 1976, 'In connection with the Countess' affairs Lloyds Bank, the Executors of her English estate, have asked me to provide them with "places of residence from date of birth to date of death" (gives dates wherever possible.) Because Adeline had disinherited her next-of-kin, Lord Rosse, in favour of General de la Feld, it fell to me to supply the authorities with the necessary details since I had inherited her papers, most of which I had brought from Canada and from Forest Farm before it was pulled down after the Duchess of Newcastle's death in the 1950s.

Adeline's recurrent theme about the lack of intelligence among the various Dukes of Newcastles' relations did not apply to Thomas Hope who fascinated her by his independence and originality, especially as a youth who left his grand homes for dangerous wanderings in the Middle East, Greece and Italy, drawing and writing as he went. Adeline traced many of her great-

great-grandfather's journeys and had a particular interest in Hope's visit to Sicily in 1792 with his painting friend George Wallis, known as the English Poussin.

Adeline often took her Parsons relations on her travels but not when she went with a young and ultimately well-known politician who, unfortunately for her, was married. Aleister Crowley was not to be found at his Cefalu temple when Adeline and her lover visited the site and experimented with a form of the black mass. Like Thomas Hope before her, Adeline was intrigued by various cults of the snake, including Christ's allusion to it as a symbol of wisdom, and centuries before that, its place in the Jews' escape from Egypt, 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish.'

In 1919 Adeline lived with her Aunt Emily, Princess Doria, at the Palazzo Doria in Rome because Dr Eugenie Strong, Director of the British School of Art employed Adeline for research. In *My Zapiski* she writes of 'many walks' with Dr Strong and how 'four anxious weeks went by' as Adeline waited a letter from her lover. In her work at the British School Adeline made a study of the Brazen Serpent, venerated in Ophite worship. In AD 971, a Milanese ambassador to Constantinople had been invited to select a gift from the imperial collection, and he chose a brazen serpent made of the same metal as the one destroyed by Hezekiah, the 12th King of Judah who ascended the throne in 726BC. During their tours Adeline and the Director of the British School paid particular attention to the ambassador's brazen serpent kept in Milan's church of St Ambrose.

Before Adeline left Italy still unmarried but no longer a virgin, as a memento of their romantic journey to Sicily, the young politician gave Adeline a ring, and in her will she described it as 'A gold and platinum ring of snake design with ruby and sapphire eyes.' This ring was more precious to her than any other of her possessions and she left it to me because I was the last remaining person to have been involved with the MP she loved.

Who's Had Who?

When Adeline de la Feld's brother, Sir Kenelm Lister-Kaye, died in 1955 he left a vast fortune that had grown from their mother's Hope dowry, and the largest chunk of it went to Bridget Parsons, which delighted Adeline since her niece was the sole person in the family to take over Adeline's work among destitute immigrants at the East End's Deptford Institute. Curiously, the institute had a link with Thomas Hope, because his granddaughter, Henrietta Hope, got money as well as diamonds for her loveless marriage to the Duke of Newcastle, and a portion of that dowry went to her daughter, Lady Florence Pelham-Clinton, who used it to found and run the institute.

Lord Byron was the poet who came to Thomas Hope's defence over legal matters in 1810 and Sir John Betjeman, the Poet Laureate, liked to consider himself as the authority on Hope's descendants and went readily into court with Bridget Parsons when she was charged with drunken driving. But in 1963, when the Minister of Defence, John Profumo, resigned over the Christine Keeler affair, Betjeman showed more caution about appearing in the witness-box. He had written the poem *In A Devonshire Street Waiting Room* but now found little room for Stephen Ward, even though it was obvious the Establishment intended to make Ward their scapegoat in the same way as it had pilloried Oscar Wilde whom Betjeman so idolised.

On 27 June 1963, John Betjeman sent me a letter at my Bloomsbury flat from his house at Cloth Fair in the City. Printed on the envelope was 'Note charming Manx Stamp' and I anticipated the style of its contents such as 'I am delighted to address you up there in your penthouse. Do come and see me on the way down from the penthouse,' complete with a drawing of me up in my penthouse and himself down at the Cloth Fair. The poet knew that Bridget had been to look at a vacant flat near mine for her Aunt Adeline who had the idea of coming to live in London near the British Museum in order to research her latest book.

Meanwhile a much more important visitor had crossed the Atlantic from Washington to Ireland where President Kennedy received a doctorate at Dublin University from the Vice Chancellor, Adeline's nephew, Lord Rosse. A presidential friend, Charles Spalding, noted that Kennedy 'felt terribly for Profumo...Jack also thought the girls involved were kind of cute.' But was Kennedy himself personally involved with the cute girls? Certainly he ordered David Bruce, the American Ambassador in London to send all embassy cables on the Profumo affair to him personally at the White House.

Bridget Parsons was making much of the Stephen Ward trial for she had met Jacqui Chang who had starred in the film *World of Suzie Wong* and had been Antony Armstrong-Jones's girlfriend before he married Princess Margaret, Eastern beauty having inspired the future Lord Snowdon to make two portfolios of photographs. Another of the Chinese beauties was the actress, Suzy Chang, who started calling herself 'Jackie' when Armstrong-Jones broke off his relationship with Jacqui Chang. I had met Suzy Chang in 1961 when I stayed in Shepperton with the producer Jimmy Wright, and she was down Manygate Lane at the film studios with Bob Hope, Bing Crosby and Joan Collins acting in *Road to Hongkong*.

The ex-friends of Princess Margaret's husband interested President Kennedy too, and the day Jack Kennedy was receiving his degree from Princess Margaret's step-father-in-law in Dublin, an American newspaper linked Suzy Chang with 'one of the biggest names in American politics.' The President immediately got his brother Robert, the Attorney General, to operate a massive cover-up.

While writing his Ward biography *Honeytrap* Stephen Dorril came to consult me and I told him about Bridget Parsons's intense jealousy of the Duchess of Windsor who had met one of Ward's girlfriends through Eric, Earl of Dudley. Before the war, Dudley had been involved in Indian politics and knew Gilbert Laithwaite from Gilbert's multifarious activities in the sub-continent. Being 'safely in Purgatory' when *Honeytrap* came out in 1987 with its revelations about Gilbert's life with Lady Astor's family, Gilbert could not sue, although somebody else did. Stephen Ward's connection with the famous in and out of the Devonshire Street waiting-room was well known and fully documented by the security services on both sides of the Atlantic.

The poet who featured that room in his poem would have his own homosexual past revealed in the press later, but in 1963 as we sipped dry martinis at the Cloth Fair, Betjeman was blaming Bridget Parsons's loose and ever-more-bitter tongue on over-drinking. 'All that money did her no good,' he informed me and I had to admit that Bridget's ability to pay drink bills increased considerably with her inheritance from the murdered and intestate Rachel Parsons.

Sir John found Bridget's Uncle Kenelm most intriguing because at Eton another aspiring poet, Evan Tredegar, had been worshipped by Kenelm. When I told Adeline that her cousin, the Duke of Newcastle, had decided to seal and bury the family mausoleum at Dorking to roof level to keep grave-robbers out, she snorted, 'To keep the black mass boys out' and by this she included by implication one of the 'Three Robber Baronets,' her brother, Sir Kenelm Lister-Kaye.

By 1974 it had become quite usual for Adeline's letters to me and to her

sister, Lady de Vesci, to refer to her father, uncle and brother in such scathing terms, but even so, the lawyers Messrs Greaves, Atter & Beaumont, of Wakefield in Yorkshire must have been surprised to read this from Adeline, dated 27 January 1974, 'I fancy the Parsons grandchildren will read with amused surprise of the "Three Robber Baronets." I am not afflicted with any regret at having put an ocean and a continent between me and the coal dust of Yorkshire.'

On 23 November 1974 she wrote to Lady de Vesci at Womersley Park in Yorkshire, 'This is what Robert finds interesting for the next generation, as I have written down my thoughts as they came along.' She told another person in the Parsons family about my work on her memoirs, Lady de Vesci's grandson William, Earl of Rosse, who got the Archivist from the Public Records Office to sort out some of the documents I had brought from Canada in 1949. On 23 December 1985 William wrote to me, 'Both I and my mother are fascinated by what we read in your letter. We also have a surprising number of Aunt Ad's letters, comprising both those written to us, and those returned here after her death. These are now being incorporated into the archives in our Muniment Room.'

When Adeline first asked me in 1949 to take a trunk of papers to her aunt's house in Windsor Forest, I had no inkling of the extent to which I would become involved with the Duke of Newcastle's estate. Yet on my very first evening at Forest Farm the Duchess of Newcastle had told me enough to whet my appetite for more about Oscar Wilde and the Hope diamonds. What she said in 1949 and what Adeline wrote in her autobiography confirm the opinion Lady Randolph Churchill held of the family when she noted on 12 July 1880 that one of the Duchess of Newcastle's daughters, 'a nice looking girl, very well educated and with a large fortune,' was going to marry Cecil Lister-Kaye, 'a sick tiresome youth.'

By then William Gladstone was entering his second term of office as Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury, and while writing that he would like to turn his back on Clumber, because of the important role the Newcastles had played in his early political career he had no choice but to continue as a Clumber trustee. Cecil Lister-Kaye was physically strong but his monopoly of conversation on the subject of Samuel Pepys and his diary made more than Lady Churchill regard Cecil as 'a sick tiresome youth.'

Being in great favour with Charles II and elected President of the Royal Society in 1684, Pepys depicted men in high places in his diary, and his descendant, Lady Caroline Pepys, who married into the Lister-Kaye family in 1852, also knew the famous having spent years of her life at the Palace of Westminster where her father, Lord Cottenham, was several times Lord Chancellor, and she would not be browbeaten by a Liberal upstart like

William Gladstone. Lady Caroline's sister, Evelyn, married Lord Courtenay whose unmarried predecessor, known as 'Kitty', had, while still a 16 year old schoolboy, become lover to his cousin William Beckford, that important Newcastle ancestor some of whose valuable possessions later added to Clumber's glories of which Gladstone was trustee.

Samuel Pepys left 3000 books and his own manuscripts to his old college at Cambridge, Magdalen. He wrote in the Rich's system of shorthand and nobody deciphered and published his writing until 1825, but by the time the tiresome Cecil Lister-Kaye went up to Magdalen as an undergraduate in 1874, the Pepysian Library was famous.

The schoolboy Duke of Newcastle gave his sister Beatrice away to tiresome Cecil Lister-Kaye in a wedding at an Ulster castle in 1880 but the Newcastle family trustees ensured that the fortune-hunting Cecil had access only to the interest of the capital. Six years later all this changed when Cecil's elder brother, Sir John, fell into heavy gambling debts through accompanying the Prince of Wales too often. The Newcastle trustees came to the rescue by allowing his sister-in-law, Lady Beatrice, to spend part of her dowry on buying the Family Place, Denby Grange, from the embarrassed Sir John Lister-Kaye who could then become Groom-in-Waiting to his 'fat friend' when crowned as King Edward VII.

Lady Beatrice's eldest daughter, Adeline de la Feld, later described what her mother was like, 'Ignorant of money matters all her life, like a child of five, her fortune held in those days in the keeping of trustees - misnamed as I found them and mostly untrustworthy.' Adeline was the eldest of three daughters, each unwanted since they were born before the all-important male heir Kenelm. She hated having to go with the family to Scotland every August so that Kenelm could indulge proper manly sports such as shooting thousands of grouse, a repulsive slaughter which horrified Adeline. But then Cecil Lister-Kaye, no less tiresome as a father than he had been as a 'sick' youth, having got his wife's money to stop the Family Place from going to strangers, began to wonder if Kenelm either would or could himself produce the all-important male heir.

Lady Randolph Churchill had written of Sir John Lister-Kaye going to a fancy-dress ball at Londonderry House dressed in chain-mail as Sir Kaye of the Round Table while the future Queen Mary went as Queen Elizabeth I. But that did not amuse the royal family so much as hearing how Kenelm Lister-Kaye was sporting ancient costumes in the black mass with his fellow-Etonian Evan Tredegar. Kenelm succumbed so completely to Evan's spell that Kenelm was prepared to fight with his father about rejecting the family college at Cambridge in favour of Oxford where Kenelm insisted on going in order to be with Evan Tredegar and there Evan and Kenelm were soon in the

weird procession entering Hugh Montgomery's rooms at Christ Church.

Not being Welsh, Kenelm could not similarly join Evan in the Welsh Guards although as flying had become a consuming interest, he did the next best thing and went into the Royal Air Force. While on leave in Paris, Kenelm was surprised to see his eldest, but certainly not dearest, sister on the balcony of the Ritz Hotel in the arms of a young politician. The discovery of her secret pleased him for she disapproved of Evan's influence over Kenelm and their involvement in the black mass with boys from their Uncle Newcastle's private Choir School. In 1920 those choirboys turned up in full force at Clumber chapel when Adeline made her limp vows to Count Guglielmo de la Feld.

In due course the father became Sir Cecil Lister-Kaye and died in 1931 convinced that his only son and heir, Kenelm, would never go to bed with a woman to produce the next heir. Nevertheless, Lady Beatrice made over the Denby Grange estate to the new baronet, Kenelm, and continued her allowance to Adeline as usual. On 27 January 1974, Adeline wrote to the family lawyers, Greaves, Atter & Beaumont in Wakefield, 'I recollect that Lady Beatrice Lister-Kaye told me, in the event of Sir Kenelm dying without male heir the next heir to the Denby Grange estate would be the Hon. Desmond Parsons, and if he died prematurely then, if I survived, I was to receive an annuity. Was Lady Beatrice deceived and no such deed ever formulated and signed?'

Desmond Parsons was only 24 when his grandmother, Lady Beatrice, died leaving unsolved the mystery of why she stipulated to Adeline what should happen if Desmond died 'prematurely.' Did she have a premonition that he would? Certainly his adoring Aunt Adeline wrote that Desmond thought himself unlucky, presumably taking for granted what others regarded as his great financial luck, for he was not only Adeline's sole heir but his Uncle Kenelm's as well to the Denby Grange estate if not to the title. And this was what made the mild dislike between Adeline and her brother Kenelm turn into a flaming hatred. Had Desmond flown to Germany with Kenelm and Evan Tredegar he would not have picked up the unidentified but fatal disease in China whither Adeline had paid for him to go. She had no objection to Evan and his homosexual circus as such, but she strongly resented young men lured to his circle by its insistence that genius is the exclusive domain of practising male homosexuals.

Adeline wrote that she left England for Canada to get over Desmond's death in 1937, although Evan Tredegar believed Adeline had fled her brother's wrath because the heart-broken Kenelm never recovered from the loss of his young friend and heir who also happened to be his nephew. When Kenelm died in 1955 the title went to a distant cousin and his fortune largely to Desmond's sister, Bridget Parsons, whose drinking grew steadily more excessive. It disturbed Adeline to read about a large dinner party given by

Bridget followed by a ball at a leading hotel, creating the impression that Bridget was trying to live the past again when she had danced in the Prince of Wales's arms at Lady Cunard's ballroom.

It seemed that Bridget could not face the reality of what was happening to her and took refuge in a welter of social engagements that left little time for the Deptford Institute or reporting on it to her Aunt Adeline. The police charge of drunken driving in 1960 surprised neither Stephen Ward nor me and soon Bridget went into social decline writing bitter letters to her aunt about her former friends. I felt sorry for Kenelm when I knew him in the 1940s as Evan Tredegar's old school chum grieving over the beloved Desmond. In 1968 I brought the first draft of Adeline's *My Zapiski* to England and went through it with her family and friends. Why did she brand Kenelm as one of the 'Three Robber Baronets?'

In her letter to the family lawyers in January 1974, Adeline wrote, 'My interest ends in 1948, when the Denby Grange estate is sold, demolished, done away with and got rid of. The fairy tale aspect of the pauper baronet, who unaccountably becomes so opulent he leaves a considerable fortune to his niece, Lady Bridget Parsons. Sir John Lister-Kaye's settlement for his nieces, though it should have been available many years earlier, is now finally being paid.'

In 1971 Peter Churchill was working on his second book of memoirs and came on most days to see me about it, but unfortunately Adeline's adviser, Major Cuthbert Holmes, had died by then so I could not consult him about the former Premier of British Columbia, Robert Beavan, whose three children were connected by marriage to Peter and Cuthbert, though Peter having to marry Kathleen Beavan, his mother's lesbian lover, to cover-up the two women's affair, produced a union neither of bodies nor money. But help about Kathleen Beavan nevertheless arrived when William Ireland, the Provincial Librarian and Archivist of British Columbia sent me a sheaf of press cuttings.

In my letter of thanks I mentioned how his archives were being researched by a Canadian historian who interviewed Adeline about the participation of her uncle, Sir John Lister-Kaye, in Canada's mineral exploitation. This brought some extraordinary revelations. Although Sir John had died in 1924 leaving Adeline an annuity, it only reached her 50 years later, for until then it had been illegally siphoned off and enjoyed by first her father and then by her brother Kenelm.

Eventually I persuaded Adeline to write from Canada to the Wakefield lawyers about her mother's will, since that was a publically registered document easily traced. But there was no will. Lady Beatrice had died intestate. Adeline wrote to her sister, Lady de Vesci, on 5 November 1974, to explain, 'In my family history Mum was cheated much worse than you have

been. I know how hard it is to say a truth to a person's face. It was poor, poor Mum's greatest failure. Could she have had the courage to face up to the truth how much happier we all would have been. There are the three Robber Baronets. Uncle John paid off his racing and gambling debts out of her money given to him by his greedy brother in exchange for Denby Grange. Father never let anyone know the estate was hers, bought with her money. Her son Kenelm got her to sign a fraudulent document whereby she surrendered all her fortune to him, not only the Denby Grange estate which she longed to get rid of, wherefore WE - you and I - got nothing beyond a small amount called "a marriage settlement" which should have been paid long before. You have not been as intolerably treated as Mum was, have you? She never knew it. She only knew she was terribly unhappy.'

Because of that unhappiness and the criminal behaviour of the Robber Baronets, Adeline sought to honour her mother's memory by selling the Hope diamonds and using the proceeds to endow a church and convent in which Lady Beatrice had spent so many hours seeking solace in her unhappiness. But as though the jinx of the Hope diamonds struck again, the Church Commissioners failed to follow Adeline's instructions, so she rejected them and gave the money to charities instead.

Anthony Blunt wanted the Hope diamond collection to remain intact and go as such to his friend Lord Rosse, Adeline's nephew, at her death. A fierce row erupted when Blunt accused Bridget Parsons of having the Beckford Disease and of being mad to make such allegations about him and Guy Burgess. Adeline was delighted when the sale of her jewels and Blunt's name appeared in a High Court action, though she was right in thinking it was just one more gagging writ to stop me talking about Hess and Lonsdale Bryans in the war.

In 1971 at a trial in the High Court heard on my Order, Mr Brian Neill QC handed Mr Justice Swanwick a publisher's report on a 'highly dangerous' novel Adeline and I had jointly written about Anthony Blunt giving lectures on Italian art housed in Adeline's family homes. Blunt had not only been as familiar with Kenelm Lister-Kaye's gay scene at Oxford as with his own at Cambridge, because both overlapped for spying activities as well as bed-hopping, but he also knew such things as the reason for the breakdown in Dil de Rohan's business when Nancy Mitford pulled out as a director to become Bridget Parsons's friend. In addition, Blunt's acquaintances included the young men who basked in Kenelm's ill-gotten largesse which should have gone to paying his sisters' annuities from their Uncle John's estate. Blunt feared me for many reasons, not least because Adeline left me her papers that were, and are, so damaging to the Establishment which covered up his Russian past and protected him from prosecution.

Adeline's Uncle Francis, 8th Duke of Newcastle, inherited both the Deepdene and the blue Hope diamond which is in the Smithsonian today, but he ran up such horrendous debts through lavish entertainment of the royal family and shooting parties that by 1894 he was declared bankrupt and discharged on payment of ten shillings in the pound to his creditors who doubtless felt lucky to get 50% back. By 1912 the Deepdene and other ducal estates had fallen into the receivers' hands, which could all conveniently be blamed on the jinx of the Hope diamond especially as by now the Sultan of Turkey had bought the diamond and, as Smithsonian literature points out, its jinx too, for his dynasty toppled.

The English gentleman was always aware of the sporting chance that he would lose every penny of the money he had probably got in the first place by marrying an heiress. But then, there was probably an equally sporting chance that more money would turn up to get him out of bankruptcy as happened in the case of Sir John Lister-Kaye whose sister-in-law Lady Beatrice used her portion of her Newcastle dowry to bail him out. And in the end it was her money that enabled Adeline, fleeced by the Three Robber Baronets, to give financial help to her sister Lois, Lady de Vesci. I found it quite bizarre that there was Adeline in her 94th year, confined to her bed-sitting room in Canada, signing her cheques so that her sister in her stately home at Womersley Park in Yorkshire could entertain British royalty in the 1960s, though true, the royals arrived with fewer servants than Adeline had seen at Clumber fifty years before when King Edward VII would not sit down 13 to dinner.

At least Adeline respected the king for that because such superstitions had a place in Adeline's life also. She would never stay in an hotel room numbered 13 and regarded 9 as her lucky number so that in her will the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in British Columbia and other charities got \$900 each.

George Balcombe and his family thought it strange that Adeline had been so fond of her Hope diamond brooch yet sold it and wore the replica which, while expensive, was devoid of historical association. But that, in Adeline's eyes, was precisely the replica's value, because the historical associations had been a baleful spectre haunting her whole life until exorcised by the sale of the very last piece of her Hope jewelry. Adeline knew she could never contest her brother Kenelm's will in the law courts. She termed the document 'fraudulent' which Kenelm made his mother sign in 1931, but her mother signed no document when she handed her considerable collection of jewels to Adeline at the same time, while in the end, Adeline not only outlived the despised Robber Baronet Kenelm by twenty years, but she died richer than him.

But more than anything, what kept Adeline away from the law courts where so many family quarrels had been aired but never settled, was her dread that she might have to talk before a jury about the pair of Hope diamond earrings sold in 1936 which enabled her to send Desmond Parsons on his fatal journey to China. For the remainder of her life, that event was too painful to talk about. Kenelm knew his sister's habits well and that she lived in a tiny flat in London and later in a bed-sitter in Canada so that she could have large sums of money left over to endow High Churches started by her mother's Hope family, acts of contrition which Adeline hoped would exorcise the guilt that haunted her for sending Desmond to his death on the proceeds of the Hope diamonds.

On the morning of 21 October 1974 Adeline listened to the radio news which ended with fatality in a family at Verona. A boy of 7 had thrown a ball into a river and rushed in to get it, while the mother plunged after to rescue the boy. Then the husband seeing the wife in danger dived in as well and all three were drowned. Adeline immediately thought it was her great-nephew, General de la Feld, his French wife Nicole and their son Lorenzo. For two weeks Adeline's fright prevented her from telling John Nation and his wife Dagmar about it as they were, and are, friends of the de la Felds.

In a letter to Nicole de la Feld of 8 November 1974, Adeline wrote, 'I knew the moment had arrived when I must share my fear and anxiety with Dagmar as to what might have happened and I decided with her beside me to telephone you. When we got no answer on the phone we decided to send a telegram. A *bonne pensée* has resulted from this experience. For so many years I have been a reluctant rebel. I could not accept all that the Churches told me about the Christian Faith. Now I prayed, even the Apostles asked for a sign - If Paolo, you and Lorenzo are all safe and alive I would accept this as the sign that I must cease to be a rebel and believe in the Triune God, and never doubt again. This had been a test to bring me to belief. As I was writing to you, came your glorious message, "All well. Madly busy. Phone not working." I rang up Dagmar at once. And we are so happy.'

On 5 November 1976 John Nation, as one of Adeline's Canadian executors, wrote to me, 'I have sent off three parcels of books and papers which will no doubt take at least two months to reach you. I do hope they arrive intact. In one of them you will find Countie's wedding ring and another ring she wanted you to have. All letters from Michael and his family have been returned to him as that was your Godmother's wish. Many of the cuttings and papers could have been thrown away, I suppose, but they cover such a diversification of interests and are so typical of her that I thought you would be amused and pleased to see them. The "*anthologie de bonnes pensées*" is to be sent to Nicole. You could probably make some arrangement with her to

see it - a good excuse for a trip to Verona. Sincerely, John.'

The three parcels John sent were only those papers Adeline had collected since my last visit in 1969. Meanwhile, in the 1950s, Adeline's aunt, the Duchess of Newcastle died and before the demolition of Forest Farm I had to remove Adeline's effects which then went into the loft at the Balcombe home in Brighton. Both George Balcombe and I found it intriguing that Adeline not only wrote about her family's quarrels and lawsuits over the Hope diamonds since 1831, but kept press reports and photographs that had been syndicated world-wide about the tragedy which struck the American who wore the blue Hope diamond before it went to the Smithsonian. I was indeed fascinated by the 'cuttings and papers' John Nation sent me. The jinx had crossed the Atlantic with the jewel, for not long afterwards Evalyn Mclean, the owner's grand-daughter died mysteriously at the age of 25.

To Adeline de la Feld the mystical was real, dark as well as light. It had been an 'immense' relief when the last of her own spectral Hope jewels went to Christies in 1967. But so haunted was Adeline by the fate of her nephew, Desmond, and by the accusing finger of her brother, Kenelm, that only in her 94th year did she give up being a rebel and accept the Anglican faith she had been so heavily supporting financially for so many years.

The blue Hope diamond had been smuggled out of an Indian temple in the 1640s and then stolen from the French crown jewels in 1792 before turning up in 1830 for Henry Hope to buy, so no wonder the British Customs and Excise keep watch not only at air and seaports but on such things as Christie's sale of **Important Jewels** which included Adeline's jewels 'from the Henry Hope Estate.' Over two years after that sale, H M Customs and Excise in Lincoln's Inn Fields wrote to me c/o my publishers, Faber and Faber, 'I should like to get in touch with you regarding a piece of jewellery which you disposed of through Christie Manson & Woods in May 1967. I understand that the above is solely an accommodation address. Will you please give me an address and telephone number where you may be contacted. I enclose an official paid envelope for your reply.'

This made me suspicious for I was not asked about the Hope collection of diamonds sold by Adeline via me but about 'a piece of jewellery' which I guessed immediately to be the Hope Star. As a young man wandering on his travels, Thomas Hope not only dressed like a Turk but like the hero of his novel *Anastasi*, totally discarded the Christianity of boyhood in Protestant Holland. He put his trust in diamonds. Wherever he went people knew, and particularly highwaymen, that Hope was loaded with jewels.

In 1816 Lady Caroline Capel wrote from Vevay to the Dowager Countess of Uxbridge, 'There have been some frightful robberies between this and Milan - Lady Frances Beresford, Mr. and Mrs. Hope and Mr.

Leicester and his family were all stopped by bandits armed with doubled barrel guns...they took everything from them...and wounded one of the couriers.'

The Italian bandits, however, did not take Mrs Hope's 'antique diamond brooch pendant' as it was described on the receipt Albert Middlemiss of Christies wrote for me on 27 April 1967. This Hope Star remained a favourite of the Hope women until 1830 when Thomas sent his son Henry off to buy the blue diamond which is in the Smithsonian today. When Thomas Hope died in 1831, his sons not only rushed to their lawyers over who was going to get which diamonds but also to stop publication of their father's last book, **An Essay on the Origin and Prospects of Man**. He confirmed the apostasy of his youth in Turkey by a later obsession with metaphysics and aesthetics, hence his last book. Despite his rejection of Christianity, Thomas Hope nevertheless chose a titled archbishop's daughter for his marriage of convenience, subsequently ridiculed by the painting of 'Beauty and the Beast,' while his third son, Alexander Beresford-Hope, taking the extra surname of his grandfather, Archbishop Lord William Beresford, went on to become a famous High Churchman and principal founder of St Augustine's College at Canterbury and brother-in-law of that equally zealous churchman, Prime Minister Lord Salisbury. With such influence, the brothers had little difficulty in getting Thomas Hope's last book suppressed.

On her marriage to the 'sick tiresome youth' Cecil Lister-Kaye in 1880 at Castle Blayney in Ulster, Lady Beatrice was given the Hope Star. To thwart any plans the obviously tiresome youth might have of appropriating his wife's jewels, the lawyers ensured that, like the Denby Grange estate, all the jewels remained as Lady Beatrice's own property. But as her daughter Adeline commented, Lady Beatrice was like a child of five concerning financial matters and in 1931 allowed herself to be robbed of her entire fortune by her son Kenelm. Whatever Adeline might have written in 1974 to her sister Lois about it being 'a fraudulent document', in law it remained the only document since no registered record existed of Lady Beatrice handing over to Adeline the Hope Star and other jewels at the same time as Kenelm was asking his mother to sign the so-called 'fraudulent document.'

Adeline wrote to me after the sale of her diamonds in 1967, 'It is an end, a final parting. I can imagine what my mother felt that morning when she handed me the Anastasius Pearls and diamonds.' Lady Beatrice felt relieved at finally parting with her jewels because they had caused such havoc within the family for so long in and out of the law courts. When Lady Beatrice had a necklace stolen in the 1920s, the lawyers urged her to have her jewels properly listed and fully insured. But this flew in the face of family tradition. On 6 June 1974 Adeline sent a cheque to her sister Lois saying, 'You can

accept the enclosed as a legacy. If I send it before I die it is a free gift, otherwise it will be taxed. I very much resent taxing gift money.'

Old Established gentry liked to evade death duties by setting up family trusts, a ploy familiar to Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise. The Hope jewel box which Lady Beatrice lent to William Balcombe in 1920 for his portrait of his wife as St Helena at Brighton Pavilion, is small compared to other Hope treasure chests such as those Adrian Hope and his heirs kept at More House in Chelsea and which today are on display there for the public.

Frequent raids over the years on the remains of Thomas Hope and his descendants in the mausoleum at Dorking heightened Lady Beatrice's fear of being alone in that mausoleum of the living, Denby Grange, while her son and heir, Kenelm, globe-trotted with the black mass priest Evan Tredegar. In 1967 Adeline felt an immense relief at getting rid of the Hope Star, the Anastasius Pearls and all connection with the Hope gems but while Christie's sale formed 'an end, a final parting' for her, that parting was anything but final for me because the Customs and Excise at Lincoln's Inn kept records.

In 1949 I brought a trunkful of Adeline's papers and letters from Canada to her Aunt Kathleen at Forest Farm where Adeline intended to settle down after completing the journey she began in 1937 because Desmond Parsons died. I returned to Canada in 1950 to teach on Vancouver Island where Adeline joined me for several months until she found a suitable ship to take her from there to New Zealand. As she would be abroad for nearly two years and was already in her 70s, Cuthbert Holmes advised me to take the Hope Star and other diamonds for safe-keeping to Forest Farm to await Adeline's arrival there planned for 1952, and if meanwhile Adeline died, her executors could then easily hand the jewels over to Adeline's niece, Bridget Parsons. Adeline liked this idea and so in 1951, while she left Canada intending never to return, I crossed the Atlantic again and went to Forest Farm with Adeline's gems.

Her aunt, the Duchess of Newcastle, had been most gracious to me in 1949 when I turned up with Adeline's books and papers but she was not so well disposed in 1951 to have more Hope diamonds under her roof in the royal forest of Windsor where so many tragedies had befallen her Irish family, the first being the fall from a horse which killed her unmarried uncle, Lord Rossmore, while competing in a military steeplechase. Kathleen herself went on to be a famous horsewoman although by the time I stayed at Forest Farm equine matters concerned her rather less than eternity.

Such a spectacular assortment of Hope jewels did the duchess sell at Christies in 1949 that by 1967 Albert Middlemiss had the large photograph of them still displayed in his department. So many deaths and other unpleasant happenings were associated with her Hope jewels that after their sale

Kathleen Newcastle felt the same kind of relief as Adeline was to experience later.

Before the duchess sent the jewels to Christies she allowed Queen Mary a private view, for this royal lady knew that the whole collection, together with Adeline's, would have gone to the royal family if Bridget Parsons had married Prince George, who had his own problems, as did his mother, Queen Mary. The death and disaster curse of Thomas Hope's treasure trove resembled the sinister events that followed the Earl of Carnarvon's discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb.

Lord Carnarvon's son and heir, a jockey called Porchey, told in his autobiography how after a race King George V said, 'My dear Porchey I would like you to take me near enough to the rails to hear the bookmaker who shouts "the favourite's fucked for fifty".' Porchey also wrote of Queen Mary visiting his home and 'at the time it was well known to all her many friends that the Queen was in the habit of casting a "roving eye" on any little "objet d'art" that appealed to her. When we were in the library, she said to Lady Airlie, "Mabel, don't you think it's quite remarkable? That dear little box might be a twin of the one I've got in my sitting-room." At that stage I suggested that if she would care to accept the "twin", I would be enchanted for her to have it as a little memento of her visit.'

Curiously, among Kathleen Newcastle's jewels, there was in fact a genuine "twin". It was a pearl and diamond earring, one of a pair, the other being missing after the pair had been separated for incorporation in brooches, although still remaining identifiable. Before the Newcastle jewels left for Christies, a thorough search was made for the missing earring. Just as in later life Queen Mary loved visiting the Duchess of Newcastle at Forest Farm, so conveniently near Windsor Castle and loved by the Queen for being the home in the 1880s of her 'dear Peter' Wells who paid her parents' hotel bills in Italy, so at the age of thirteen, the future Queen Mary paid her first visit to Clumber and where it was possible she had been given one of the converted earrings. It was at Clumber that Queen Mary made 'acquaintance with one of the finest libraries in the kingdom, and admired as well the princely collection of paintings,' according to Kathleen Woodward.

At any rate, Queen Mary was delighted in 1949 to be given the earring "twin" by her old friend Kathleen Newcastle. Religious conviction pre-occupied the once-famous chatelaine of Clumber, but she took superstition as seriously as King Edward VII and her niece Adeline did, and she naturally, or perhaps supernaturally, felt apprehensive about having more Hope jewels in the house. Nevertheless, the duchess was like an excited child when I turned up at Forest Farm in 1951 and she found that amongst Adeline's listed jewels was the missing "twin" converted earring.

When Adeline duly came from New Zealand the following year she settled into Forest Farm and renewed lapsed royal friendships, especially with Princess Marie-Louise, patroness of the ballet. She went to the Royal Academy of Dancing to watch Catherine Devilliers and her students who were the same age as their teacher was when Adeline first went to her at the Bolshoi Theatre School in 1908. The focus of attention was 'Pat', as we all called Sir Anton Dolin who was only 16 years old in 1921 when he danced in *The Sleeping Beauty* in London. Pat had now become co-founder of the Festival Ballet with Dame Alicia Markova whose youthful glamour is preserved in one of my Hedi Pillitz portraits.

At Christmas in 1951 I had joined 'Big Pat' McClellan in Hanley for the *Cinderella* pantomime and the merry time we had in the pub where many of the company lodged reminded me of Patrick's 1936 cast lodging in our Belfast house. Michael Charnley danced Jack Frost in *Cinderella* to his own sparkling choreography and I put him in my story *Man In A Pub*, later produced by Louis MacNeice's BBC department because he knew the tale featured our mutual friends.

Adeline felt excited, as did her friend from the old days at Windsor, Guy Liddell, when Michael Charnley got the commission to do the choreography for *Alice In Wonderland* to Joseph Horowitz's music at the Festival Hall. Princess Marie-Louise's family home had been run by Guy Liddell's father. Guy knew well that the unhappily-married Princess Marie-Louise had a great passion for Anton Dolin, but Guy was also aware that the passion must go unrequited for Dolin was gay and shared a flat with the handsome young dancer John Gilpin who, notwithstanding his prominence in 1950s gay circles, married a princess. And although as proud as Anthony Blunt of his family's connection with several generations of the royal family, Guy took even more pleasure in his descent from Alice Liddell of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* fame.

In his theatrical way, Anton Dolin 'adored' Kathleen Newcastle, regarding her as a sort of guardian of the temple because she had been Oscar Wilde's 'My Duchess.' Alas old age had robbed the duchess of the will to entertain on her former lavish scale at Clumber. Although a burnt-out star, the duchess was not a poor one for she had added to her considerable wealth on getting rid of her unlucky Hope diamonds in 1949. Yet she was pathologically mean about anything other than her dogs on which she lavished a fortune. Since 1937, Adeline had lived mostly in the MacDonald Hotel, Edmonton, and this vast hotel emphasised its size by providing stationery with an engraving of its grand facade. The size and the grandeur had not escaped the duchess's parsimonious eye, and when she came to work out how much to charge Adeline for living at Forest Farm, she slyly asked me what charges her

niece would have paid over the years.

Adeline decided to give a modest house-warming party at Forest Farm for her ballet friends and her Aunt Kathleen rightly suspected Princess Marie-Louise would not be the only guest expecting to see a whisky bottle. So the telephone lines between Forest Farm, Pat Dolin's home and mine buzzed with an irritated duchess trying to find out exactly how many people might turn up at the party. Adeline blew her top when she heard this. The quarrels between Adeline and her aunt lasted for days not only over the amount of money Adeline would have to pay to live at Forest Farm but also over tenure, since we knew the duchess intended leaving her estate not to Adeline but to another member of the ducal family.

The ballet party ended with the theft of Adeline's Hope Star. The police and insurance company were alerted, although we all suspected Dil de Rohan whose 'roving eye' led to more daring acquisitions than Queen Mary's 'twins.' A few days later a taxi drew up at my front door and I was astonished to see the driver struggling with Adeline's luggage. Her Aunt Kathleen had been less upset by the loss of Adeline's Hope Star brooch than by the discovery of two ballet boys 'at it' in her bed and the cost of sending valuable Persian rugs away to be cleaned because another dancer had not only been sick on them but burnt cigarette holes in them. But the last straw had been when the duchess accused Adeline of bringing disgrace on the family by having such friends and Adeline replied sharply that since so many of the Newcastle family had been before the courts for homosexual and more serious criminal activities, yet another examination by the police in public would be like old times.

So Adeline returned to Vancouver Island where she had joined me three years earlier in 1950 and where she died in 1975. First, however, Customs and Excise at Lincoln's Inn Fields expressed their prurient curiosity about the stolen Hope Star. By 1958 Adeline's aunt had died and Forest Farm, like Clumber, was rased to the ground, so for future holidays Adeline made her headquarters at Womersley Park with her great-nephew, Martin Parsons who still lives there, and where Adeline gave me yet another jewel surprise by wearing the missing Hope Star, not a replica but the real one which had not after all been stolen but misplaced by the outraged Aunt Kathleen clearing up after the ballet party.

Adeline's opinion of her ancestors seldom coincided with what she read about them, so she decided to write her own book. She told her sister, Lady de Vesci, in a letter on 23 November 1974, 'I am a thinker. A thinker is a person who cannot be satisfied with anything less than the truth. Falsifying the Wills, is wicked and immoral. Robert thinks what I have written and thought should be given "to the eyes of posterity." Not lost.' The letter's date interested me, for her papers clearly show that 'the eyes of posterity' turned

out to be the eyes of Custom and Excise investigations outside the law courts and those of distinguished barristers inside the courts similarly wanting to unravel the truth about her Hope diamonds.

Adeline wrote copiously about Thomas Hope. His youthful travels and rejection of Christianity and the success of his novel *Anastasius* made him one of her heroes and she roundly condemned his sons for suppressing his last book, an act which she came to see as utter hypocrisy by the corrupt sons against a work of sincere apostasy. Adeline defended Thomas Hope so vehemently because she resembled him in so many ways, although until John Nation sent me the last of her papers I had no written confirmation of the extent to which Thomas Hope's apostasy influenced her own thinking so that she 'could not accept all that the Churches told me about the Christian Faith,' which I read in the copy of her letter to Nicole de la Feld. A tenet of faith Adeline held long before I met her and until she died, concerned female rights. Hers was a holy war against the Three Robber Baronets and their ilk who valued women only as heiresses and producers of heirs to their titles.

Votes for Women had been the clarion call of Adeline's youth while justice and freedom for women became her lifelong struggle, from the destitute immigrants in London's Deptford Institute to the Ukrainians in Canada. Adeline admired the East End girl, Kathleen Woodward, who, with royal approval, went on to write 'A Life and Intimate Study' of Queen Mary, a 1927 second edition of which I found when clearing out Forest Farm. This biography explored Queen Mary's personal relationship with Mary Macarthur, Secretary of the National Federation of Women Workers. Adeline held James Pope-Hennessy in contempt not because of his homosexuality or his relationship with Anthony Blunt, or his friendship with Bridget Parsons which took him to Ireland to work at Abbey Leix on his own biography of Queen Mary, but for that biography itself which angered Adeline by ignoring Queen Mary's concern for women's rights expressed in her friendship with Mary Macarthur. Adeline's strong views against the Sawdust Caesar, Mussolini, had been published by Sylvia Pankhurst of the Communist Party, but that suffragette had never stayed at Clumber and other Newcastle houses and become intimate with her family as Queen Mary had done, so Adeline despised what she regarded as Pope-Hennessy's deliberate misrepresentation of the Queen Mary she knew.

Adeline took the Hope Star to Canada but it crossed the Atlantic again in 1967 when I brought it with her other jewels for Christie's sale, including three rings with diamonds and other stones which Christies could not confirm as being from the Henry Hope estate and which they therefore sold separately from the Hope Star, in an example of the expertise and research which lies behind their catalogues.

After Adeline died and Mrs Emily Balcombe went permanently into hospital, George Balcombe sorted out pictures from Forest Farm which Adeline had stored with the Balcombes in Brighton. Those not given to Queen Mary's family went to sales at Christies or Sothebys and those firms had to rely on my memory to prepare their catalogue provenances of the pictures. Often they would tell me later that such and such a picture had been exhibited at the Royal Academy in the last century.

Adeline's hackles rose when she heard how unpleasant Anthony Blunt had been to Bridget Parsons over the jewel sale at Christies. But then she had never suffered Blunt gladly, and recalled his piece for *Venture* magazine in 1929 praising her ancestor William Beckford's Gothic taste at Fonthill Abbey and forming a cult out of Beckford, some of whose adherents, mostly students, seemed less interested in the amazing tower and house itself than in Beckford's relationship with his 16 year old cousin and other boys. Her nephew Desmond Parsons was 19 years old in 1929 and, not being allowed to go to Oxford, felt torn between plans for him worked out on the one hand by his Aunt Adeline and on the other by his equally adoring Uncle Kenelm.

When I rejoined Adeline on Vancouver Island in 1967 she had worked out another plan, aimed at cutting Blunt down to size. As a professional art historian, Blunt probably did know more than Adeline about the present whereabouts of the pictures and jewels that had belonged both to William Beckford and Thomas Hope and which went to their Newcastle descendants, but Adeline could not stand Blunt's diagnosis of the mysterious 'Beckford disease' in various relations of hers, such as her niece Bridget Parsons. So in 1967 she wanted me to join her in writing a spoof, like Cecil Beaton's *My Royal Past* which had featured a photo of Bridget. Blunt's pomposity and arrogance became the butt of our book which also featured the Hope Star, owned and worn for many years by Adeline, who remembered a girlhood party at which she was allowed to wear the blue Hope diamond that later went to the Smithsonian.

Not only did Mr Brian Neill QC hand to Mr Justice Swanwick the New York publisher's report on how dangerous our novel was because we had only thinly disguised Blunt as an art historian friend of Queen Mary, but we had also mentioned the sale of the Hope Star at Christies, so naturally when Customs and Excise wrote to me from Lincoln's Inn Fields 'regarding a piece of jewellery' I immediately realised the police had not been notified that the Hope Star had been found in 1952.

Brian Neill also had in court a copy of *The Protege* in which I wrote of life with Otto Mundy at his Cookham house but also of the 21st birthday party he gave for me on board the *Vigilant*, the flagship of the Customs and Excise Chairman. In the way that Anthony Blunt faithfully returned to

Cambridge to see his old friend Andrew Gow, so Otto Mundy never failed to visit Ernest Bryans at Oxford and take him a good stock of whisky. He called his former social-tutor at Radley 'Uncle Ernest' as others did too, even though Lonsdale Bryans was the only blood relation there. Sir Otto as a Civil Servant since 1910, urged Lonsdale not to publish *Blind Victory*, for even though the book was anti-Hitler and pro German Resistance, too many politicians and their Whitehall staff were still alive, and Hess was only starting his long prison sentence.

Lord Carnarvon was quite correct in stating that Queen Mary's many friends knew of her habit of casting a 'roving eye' on other people's property. But the spy-catchers went too far, especially one who interviewed me and later wrote that he had the confidence of a retired shop-girl at Harrod's silverware department who grew accustomed over the years to Queen Mary going in and when nobody was looking slipping valuable objects into her shopping-bag. Indeed, the same book goes on to say that Harrods checked the story out and sent accounts of the stolen goods to Kensington Palace. But why to Kensington Palace? Queen Mary had left there over 50 years before and Harrods knew, like millions of others, that as a widow Queen Mary lived at Marlborough House.

Otto Mundy of Customs and Excise was sometimes called to Buckingham Palace to check up on Queen Mary's return from abroad. Queen Mary was a consort and did not enjoy the same privileges as her husband, King George V, the sovereign. Queen Mary delighted to tell about Sir Otto's attitude to the law. He was a keen admirer of skiing and when snow was imported from Norway for a special international event, Otto waited until the snow melted then went to the site and declared there was no import duty to pay as he could see no snow.

When the Tsar of Russia and his family were murdered at the Revolution their relations at Buckingham Palace felt enormous relief when, after the First World War, the British heir to the throne, their son David, followed the example of his friends, Lord and Lady Rodney, and bought himself a bolt-hole in the form of a Canadian farm. But if the Communists did not murder Edward VIII, Wallis Simpson dethroned him. Queen Mary determined that certain articles she had bought for the Canadian ranch were not going to fall into the Duchess of Windsor's hands, and the person to ensure this was her old friend Adeline de la Feld. Before I left for Canada in 1949 Otto Mundy gave me a letter of recommendation and he wrote it from 'Board Room, City Gate House, Finsbury Square, E.C.2.' the headquarters of Customs and Excise.

At the same time as Mr Brian Neill QC was producing the novel report and the result of Christie's sale in court, the insurance companies were taking

a particular interest in Marie Antoinette's pearls, two diamond necklaces and other pieces valued at \$5 million in 1971, stolen from Barbara Hutton. Because of the Newcastle family's fame over its Hope diamonds and other jewels originating with Marie Antoinette, Barbara Hutton not only acquired some of these but came close to marrying Count Manolo Borromeo, the great-grandson of the diamond heiress Henrietta Hope, who married the 6th Duke of Newcastle in 1861. In the early 1930s Barbara and Count Borromeo were often accompanied by his English cousin, Lady Bridget Parsons, as well as Peter Churchill and Jean and Morley Kennerley.

But Otto Mundy, with his interest in historic jewels, had seen the Empress Eugénie's ruby tiara move across Barbara's chess-board of husbands, and in 1971 it was included amongst the stolen jewels. Otto Mundy had died by the time of the \$5 million theft, but Morley Kennerley had never spoken to Barbara after her abortive attempt to get his trousers down in 1965. Nevertheless, when he came to Brighton with his wife Jean, I suggested that he might at least contact Chubb & Son, the insurance agent whom he had recommended to the heiress back in the days when Barbara regarded Morley as a brother.

But Peter Churchill, then sharing my home in Brighton, became alarmed. Barbara simply must not be allowed anywhere near a witness box, for not only was she utterly confused by drugs, but Peter, under cover of his passport in his name as Viscount Churchill, had carried the drugs for Barbara from Morocco to New York. When Barbara bought the Sidi Hosni Palace in Tangier in 1946, the surrounding poverty appalled her and so she provided soup-kitchens and sanitation for the poor. Tourist guides soon pointed out, 'And this is Sidi Hosni, the palace of Her Serene Highness Barbara Hutton, the Queen of the Medina.' But even during the reign of his godmother, Queen Victoria, Peter Churchill could speak Arabic with street urchins in the Medina of Tangier.

Peter's **All My Sins Remembered** fascinated Barbara with its account of how, in 1910 at the age of 19, Peter organised his escape with his mother and sisters to their North African family fortress to stop his father making the children wards of court. The outraged father, the Lord Chamberlain, Victor Churchill, made things worse by getting his lawyers to put up posters offering a reward for 'giving information enabling the undersigned to trace the following persons: A party consisting of (1) a lady, aged about 35; (2) a tall thin young man; (3) two little girls aged 12 & 9.'

The Lord Chamberlain soon became a joke in London clubs which saw him as 'le mari cocu' since Lady Verena Churchill had bolted with a tall young man. But King George V at Buckingham Palace was not deceived. His Lord Chamberlain was also a relation of the King and both were furious with the

numerous packets of 'automatic writing by spirit guides' Verena Churchill got from her 'Spiritual Director' K and which Verena sent to Queen Mary. In the end, Victor Churchill told the press that his wife had 'consulted a medium who told her that it was her duty to leave her husband and take her children with her.'

Also undeceived about the whole bizarre set-up was Verena Churchill's brother Hugh, the Yellow Earl of Lonsdale who slept in Marie Antoinette's bed at Lowther Castle. He announced that his sister's disappearance had nothing to do with 'theosophy, mediums or any such influence.' The situation hardly improved when, to please his distracted mother, Peter married her lover and medium K in an attempt to cover up the women's lesbian affair. But what Barbara Hutton also loved about Peter's autobiography was the financing of the escape, 'we still had enough money for a time, and my mother had her jewels. They were mostly Churchill heirlooms, but she was not going to let that worry her if she ran short of money and had to sell some of them....we would all go happily to live in Morocco.'

As an actor in New York during the 1930s, Peter had a unique ability to identify Churchill heirlooms which had gone to America and some had association with Marie Antoinette, who was so adored by Barbara Hutton that in 1949 she gave to the restored Versailles the splendid Savonnerie carpet which had belonged to Marie Antoinette. I tried hard to keep Peter Churchill's name out of the legal proceedings, and in the end Barbara's advisers had no choice but to say goodbye to the \$5 million worth of jewels.

But Peter's name could not be kept out for long. Three years after he died, one of the team-vicars of Rottingdean and Ovingdean, Canon Walters swore an affidavit mentioning 'Viscount Churchill.' Ivor Walters had royal connections too, because his daughter was called Elizabeth after her godmother, Queen Elizabeth II, who was in the ATS with her fellow-officer, Mrs Walters, during the war. On 17 December 1976 Bettina Ingilby Walters, using her full name, swore an affidavit which stated that George Balcombe signed 'a postcard I received on 3rd December which I believe will be before the court.'

Desmond Parsons's death in 1937 cast a shadow on Cecil Beaton's famous party of that summer but in July 1944 he recorded in his diary the death of the artist Rex Whistler, 'I have seldom felt so upset...I sobbed uncontrollably.' Whistler had been living in Brighton near another artist, William Balcombe, and so intrigued was Whistler by the story of the Prince Regent going to Brighton and having an affair with a Miss Balcombe, that he covered the whole wall of a room with a mural showing the Prince Regent clad in nothing but a pair of wings on his back and the Order of the Garter in front, approaching a sleeping nude woman, and called it 'H.R.H. The Prince Regent Awakening The Spirit of Brighton.' After the war Brighton's town

council had the mural removed as a major attraction to the Royal Pavilion where the three Balcombe brothers had lived with their royal guardian and/or father.

In 1975 William Douglas Home wrote a play called *Betsy* about Napoleon living on St Helena with Mr and Mrs William Balcombe and their daughter Betsy. Herbert Lom played Napoleon and Briony McRoberts was Betsy Balcombe. Fawdry Thomas, the local historian and parish clerk of Rottingdean, could not let Douglas Home steal all the Balcombe thunder and built up the research he had started earlier for Dame Mabel Balcombe when she gave the family home on St Helena to the French nation in 1969.

As George Balcombe was the sole member of the family owning a house in Rottingdean, the parish clerk pounced on him whenever George appeared in the village, which was seldom since he was head of a department at Thames Polytechnic and moreover writing his own book on the train home late at night, so simply could not wade through Thomas's researches. Also, old Mrs Balcombe did not wish anybody to write about the Balcombes on either side of the blanket, as there had been disputes in the High Court over property. In George's absence, Peter Churchill went over the Downs to feed and exercise the dogs at Rottingdean and one day when Thomas appeared with his latest Balcombe research, Peter lost his temper and snatched one of the imperially-crowned plates given by Napoleon to Betsy Balcombe and which Thomas wanted photographed for his research, and the plate got smashed in the melee.

The press called the High Court action 'A Storm in a Village Teacup.' But as Barrie Penrose of the *Sunday Times* wrote, there would have to be evidence given by Anthony Blunt who was the authority on the Balcombes as well as the royal family. Could Blunt go into the witness box and explain his daily telephoning to Mrs Emily Balcombe and me in 1965 which involved still-living members of MI5 and MI6? Canon Walters's affidavit stated 'On the advice of my Bishop and Archdeacon I gave instructions for the present proceedings.'

Eric Kemp, the Bishop of Chichester, was the Church Commissioner who not only sanctioned the use of central church funds for the extremely expensive High Court action but sent to the lawyers our letters following my meeting with Bishop Kemp in London. In these I thank him for bringing Pastor Niemöller over to Chichester for the unveiling of George Bell's memorial, and describe my family's connection with Niemöller through Lonsdale Bryans. But I knew I would never be allowed to cross-examine Kemp on his predecessor Bishop Bell's opposition to the RAF bombing of German cities which so upset Brendan Bracken that in revenge Bell was passed over as Archbishop of Canterbury. In any case, I had been warned by

Andrew Boyle that a Whitehall mandarin had threatened his life if Boyle continued asking me, amongst other things, about Lonsdale Bryans's 1940 mission to the Foreign Office.

Neither the High Court judges nor the Whitehall mandarins liked the way former Attorney General Silkin ran his department in general and the Rottingdean case in particular. Not only did a member of the court send me a document proving that the High Court action against me was in Sam Silkin's hands, but a distinguished QC had twice come to my home to discuss the case, as I wrote in my affidavit which Mr Justice Caulfield refused to strike out, as reported in the press.

By 1980 Mr Brian Neill had become a High Court judge, and a member of his chambers, Mr Antony Hoolahan QC was Leading Counsel who read out to the jury George Balcombe's postcard of the Prince Regent awakening the spirit of Brighton, 'Walters and Thomas indulge research in George IV's ties with my family so I hope this work of art interests you. But as I told you this morning the private life of that other Garter wearer, Sir Harold Wilson, does not interest me. Thomas's abuse of a local coloured person does interest me, however. If you were at the village fair you will have heard the sort of language used to encourage our police in the fund-raising tug-of-war.'

Some of the village police had known me in the days when I spent my holidays with Peter Harris, circumstances which Mr Hoolahan explained to the jury. The use of language formed an important aspect of this case. Was I worse than Aleister Crowley, the Great Beast? Or, indeed, was I the Devil himself, as alleged in Rottingdean Church, because I helped Father Charlton when he arranged for a distinguished actress to have sex with Peter Harris on consecrated ground at Ovingdean? Many people besides me have pointed out that gay clergy preach that boys' bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost, but on consecrated ground they bugger those temples, sometimes drugging the boys before the sex as part of the black mass. Could the boys then be blamed for returning to the scene of their abuse in vicarages and churches in order to steal works of art to pay for their drugs? Clergy such as Father Gill offended many with his disdain for 'jam rags' but could hardly complain to the police if his jettisoned boyfriends afterwards put used sanitary towels on Gill's altar.

Before the court was the name of a senior Lambeth Palace official who told the press that he wanted the age of consent for sexual intercourse with children to be reduced to 7 years. I was prepared to be termed the Devil if Bishop Kemp and his clergy found it worse for a woman to have sex voluntarily and lovingly with the crippled Peter Harris in Ovingdean Church than for a religious leader such as William McGrath forcibly to bugger boys in care at Belfast's Kincora Boys' Home. My quarrel with Attorney General Silkin largely derived from years before when he failed to act on my advice

to end the Kincora abuse.

The Rottingdean troubles had started in 1972 with Enid Bagnold's 'Great Vicar - Me Row.' By that time she had become a registered drug addict, injecting herself with morphia. Enid's biographer, Anne Sebba, reports 'Enid had long been isolated within the community and she knew it' then adds Canon Walters riposting, 'Fifty years you've been here and never given a penny to the church.' On 5 October 1977 Brighton's newspaper, the **Evening Argus**, carried an article which began, 'A bitter row that has broken the peace and quiet of Rottingdean came up in the High Court in London yesterday - for the sixth time.' Four years, and many further hearings later, the many press cuttings lay before the judge and jury.

But meanwhile, Adeline de la Feld and several of her High Church friends had died, disinheriting the Church Commissioners, and making their wills instead in favour of 'Help the Aged, RSPCA, RNIB, Salvation Army, Red Cross, Oxfam and Save the Children Fund,' as the **Daily Telegraph** reported. The same newspaper had earlier described how one of those wills had been bitterly contested in the law courts. The Church Commissioners' total loss amounted to millions of pounds.

Among the people interested in the Rottingdean High Court case which went to trial on my Order, was Tom Driberg who had died during the protracted proceedings, that intimate friend of John Betjeman and Father Colin Gill who, like Driberg himself, fought against the Church of England's proposal to tear down Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, in order to exploit the site's money-making potential, a vandal scandal Betjeman and I exposed in **Private Eye**. Of the **Ruling Passions** in Driberg's posthumous autobiography, however, architecture rules less than certain public lavatories, in one of which a leading cleric of Bishop Kemp's see had been arrested, taken to court by the police, and forced out of Holy Orders. But it was Driberg's revelation about Father Charlton which concerned me, because long before Driberg's book described Father Charlton living with two virile blond boys, the priest experienced his own embarrassments and knew much about a Brighton police sergeant found murdered in a telephone kiosk on the seafront.

Many of Driberg's Oxford friends enjoyed the black mass and he loved visiting his old college, Christ Church, where one of Nancy Cunard's once-rebel poets was now resident amongst the canons, WH Auden. As the Select Preacher at Oxford on his way to give the University Sermon, Driberg went on a procession through the city's streets preceded by the Bedel-in-Divinity, formality in stark contrast with the dinner he ate afterwards at which Auden asked Marianne Faithfull, 'When you're smuggling drugs, d'you pack them up your arse?'

The Sussex police knew as I did that some of the drug traffic in and out

of the country was run by people who had been introduced to drugs via the black mass. Aleister Crowley wrote the banned **Diary of a Drug-fiend**, and Driberg added that, 'It was alleged that he lured well-known women to these orgies, drugged them until they participated, and then had them photographed for blackmailing purposes.'

The well-known woman who remained faithful to Crowley to the end was Jesus Chutney the painter, who lent the Great Beast the beautiful Morton House on Chiswick Mall overlooking the Thames. Driberg's last visit to Morton House prompted him to write of Crowley, 'This was, I fear, rather a mean trick to play on the old boy.' But as Driberg played so many tricks on his own wife whom he did not even mention in **Ruling Passions**, I hardly expected him to be generous about either Jesus Chutney's husband or her house-guest Aleister Crowley.

Driberg claimed to be such an authority on Crowley that quite early in their relationship the Great Beast promised to nominate Driberg as his successor as 'World Teacher.' Driberg fails to say why this did not come about or why Louis Wilkinson, that voracious lover of women, became Crowley's executor and declaimed the Hymn of Pan at the Brighton funeral while Jesus Chutney and her friends ecstatically chanted 'Eo Pan! Eo Pan!'

The **Times** gave a different view from Driberg's of Jesus Chutney's husband, 'The Right Hon. Sir Percy Alfred Harris, the second son of the late Mr Wolf Harris, sometime warden of the New West End Synagogue. He was educated at Harrow and at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. Afterwards he studied law and was called to the Bar by the Middle Temple in 1899... His secretary in the 1922 election was Miss Winifred Holtby. For 23 years he watched his party shrink in the House of Commons, but he did not falter in his belief in Liberal principles.'

Before entering the Commons, Percy Harris had travelled around the world three times and found New Zealand so fascinating that he stayed three years there and wrote **New Zealand and Its Politics**. A worthy man indeed and perhaps as boring outside the Commons as Driberg claims the Liberal Chief Whip to have been. Certainly his wife found the Great Beast exciting and when he called her Jesus Chutney she allowed Crowley to oversee her painting as well as her spiritual life. Sir Kenelm Lister-Kaye, that unworthy man, had obtained a photograph of his sister Adeline with her MP lover at Aleister Crowley's temple in Sicily. In his distress when Desmond Parsons died, Kenelm threatened both Adeline and her MP with exposure, so, grabbing whatever of her jewels she could lay hands on, Adeline fled. Sir Percy Harris, anxious to avoid a political scandal, advised Adeline that New Zealand would fascinate her as it had him, and as an additional thrill she could see Canada en route. But because of the Second World War, Adeline got

stranded with the Rodneys in Alberta and did not sail to New Zealand until I left Vancouver Island in 1951.

In *My Zapiski* Adeline wrote, 'When the Aorangi steamed slowly past Rangitoto whose perfect cone shape I came to know and love so well, through the glistening waters of Waitameta Bay, into Auckland, from that moment the cruel world was left behind. A new world came into being, new in every sense, reminiscent of nothing of the past. The people were friendly, voices soft-toned and gentle. A world of enchantment, new delights and unending interest, for study, the history of the Maori and British settlement... After fifteen months spent in that lovely country I left with deep regret and reluctance.'

Adeline found Morton House on the Thames with the Harris family much more attractive than Forest Farm and her Aunt Newcastle in the shadow of Windsor Castle, for Adeline could speak freely with Jesus Chutney about the past in Sicily with her MP lover. Queen Mary probably disliked *My Royal Past* because Cecil Beaton had formed a group with Lord Berners, Sir Michael Duff, Lady Harris, Lady Bridget Parsons and others who in one way or another mocked Queen Mary's own past. But the Queen's daughter-in-law, Princess Marina 'adored' the book and she knew why Bridget had not married the late Duke of Kent.

Via his psychiatrist's chair Dr Anthony Storrs has met many people and he claims that of them all 'only Tom Driberg could justifiably be described as evil.' Francis Wheen's biography of Driberg not only observes Tom in his natural habitat in the Commons and public lavatories, but also his association with the rich and famous, including the Kray twins, 'Tom became a regular attendee at parties in Ronnie's flat in Cedra Court, where rough but compliant East End lads were served like so many canapés.' I trust that Wheen knows Driberg's world better than he did mine when writing inaccurately about my High Court actions.

Several friends mutual to Driberg and me are still alive who featured in the 1963 lawsuit against the rich-young-man-about-town and who appear neither in Tom's autobiography nor in Wheen's biography because of libel risks pointed out by their lawyers who are celebrated libel experts. Consequently the full story still cannot be told, but I would not class Tom as 'evil' although he was certainly an opportunist who used the same trick which he ascribed to Aleister Crowley, namely, blackmail.

Of his own law case when two out-of-work miners reported Driberg to the police for trying to seduce them when all three shared a single bed, Driberg wrote that he attributed his acquittal to the evidence of 'two character witnesses as much as to any other factor.' The witnesses were 'Colonel the Hon Wilfred Egerton of 38 Albemarle Street and Lord Sysonby of St James's

Palace.' Counsel asked Lord Sysonby if he met Driberg frequently and he replied, 'Yes.' There was no cross-examination of such an Establishment figure as Sysonby, for he was the son of successive monarchs' private secretary.

Lord Beaverbrook not only paid for Driberg's defence but ensured the press did not report the case. By way of thanks Driberg soon made his once-friend and employer, one of his many enemies. After all, Beaverbrook was a wicked Tory while Tom was, according to the *Guardian's* front page obituary, 'Driberg - Conscience of the Left.'

Tom also 'frequently' met another person with a royal past, Peter Churchill. In *The Greatest Treason* Richard Deacon writes, 'Between the wars Peter Churchill was a close friend of the late Lord Bradwell (Tom Driberg), with whom he closely cooperated in writing the William Hickey column of the London *Daily Express*.' This ignored the fact that Driberg and Churchill had originally developed their closeness through Aleister Crowley's and Evan Tredegar's black mass which they celebrated conveniently in various parts of Sussex including Dick Wyndham's Tickerage Mill, where Tom enjoyed 'some of the best weekend parties I have ever attended.'

But if Tom was the 'Conscience of the Left' he nevertheless adored the House of Lords and wanted to join his friend Dickie Mountbatten there. Driberg had witnessed the Bloomsbury troubles in 1963 when I reluctantly took out a writ in the High Court which Mr Justice Caulfield deemed was part of the Rottingdean case and refused to strike out. Also before the court were numerous letters concerning 'people with the highest principles but lowest morals' as a Cabinet Minister wrote of Tom and his title-seeking friends of the Left. Elwyn Jones had shared many evening strolls with me and my dog in Brighton and we often met our neighbour Peter Churchill who founded the Political Research Bureau for the Labour Party at the request of 'Lord Ponsonby, who was then Leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords,' as Peter wrote in *All My Sins Remembered*.

It was Lord Ponsonby's nephew, Lord Sysonby of St James's Palace who went into the witness box and helped to acquit Driberg. The 'Conscience of the Left' therefore had no qualm about using royal godchildren to silence the true claims by out-of-work miners. Driberg's unscrupulous opportunism contrasted sharply with the behaviour of Sir Allan Green QC, the Director of Public Prosecutions who immediately resigned in 1991 when discovered kerb-crawling.

By 1976 Elwyn Jones had become Lord Chancellor whose seal appeared on the Rottingdean writ and whose colleague, also from Wales and the same set of chambers, Sam Silkin, was the Attorney General, using the courts to conduct a personal vendetta against me for daring to disclose how

members of his own party and a section of MI5 had organised a smear campaign against Harold Wilson. It was, of course, only another gagging writ to keep me quiet, but Silkin bargained without men of conscience such as Mr Justice Caulfield who refused to strike out my affidavit about the award of titles to people with the highest principles but lowest morals.

Two weeks later, on Good Friday evening 1977, friends and neighbours in Rottingdean heard the first BBC news bulletin which said I was in a coma in the intensive care unit at the Royal Sussex Hospital in Brighton. They were horrified when the nurses pointed out a High Court Order lying on my unconscious body, sending me to prison for contempt of court. Since I had not been to the court hearing to state my side, and because Canon Walters had said in his affidavit that he had been advised by Eric Kemp, Bishop of Chichester to start the civil action against me in the High Court, my friends telephoned the bishop's palace and Kemp informed them that he could do nothing about removing the offensive prison Order since the matter was in 'higher hands.' He omitted to say that the higher hands were those of Sam Silkin, the Attorney General.

By the time the action came to trial with judge and jury in 1980, Silkin was no longer in office and had become embittered because he had not been offered the high judicial position which usually goes to an ex-Attorney General. But the new Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, when Tory leader of the Opposition, had already clashed with Silkin when she accused him 'of encouraging law-breaking by his role in legislation concerning the action of Clay Cross councillors' according to the **Daily Telegraph**. And it was Mrs Thatcher who confirmed in the House of Commons what Andrew Boyle and I had already stated in **Private Eye**, that Anthony Blunt was a Russian spy.

Both Enid Bagnold and Peter Churchill had written of their friendship with Krishnamurti and Annie Besant. Peter wrote that 'To have known Annie Besant intimately and come under her influence when one was very young was an enlightening experience, the effect of which could never be forgotten. It was an experience I shared with some remarkable people, the most widely known of them being the late Jawaharlal Nehru.' Dickie and Edwina Mountbatten, Nehru and his teacher Krishna Menon and the latter's India League and India Club were apiece. Anna Pollak became closely involved with Krishna Menon and she wrote to me on 1 November 1989, 'Krishna founded the India League in 1930 to campaign for Indian Independence & was its Secretary until it petered out after his death. He was the brilliant mind & energy behind it & after the war & then after Independence when he became High Commissioner & travelled a great deal, Bridget Tunnard tried to keep things going but she was literally worn out & eventually gave her life

as well.'

Bridget Tunnard also ran the India Club in one of the fine Georgian houses, later derelict, in Villiers Street off the Strand, and soon had Gerald Hanley, the Dublin novelist brother of James, and me as members. Peter Churchill loved it when Indian students came to the club and talked about Krishnamurti and his brother Nityananda. By 1970, Indian students from Sussex University came down the Falmer Road to meetings with Peter Churchill at the Balcombe house in Rottingdean. For years Churchwarden Fawdrey Thomas had come into a wild part of the Balcombe garden to pick flowers for the church altar, but he did not dare to enter the gate if he saw Peter cross-legged in a yogi position under a tree talking to the students. The churchwarden started an anti-Indian campaign which upset the Balcombe neighbours and recordings were made of the racism, which duly became part of the High Court case. But the other side of the case was financed by Bishop Kemp who, like Tom Driberg, was a member of the Church of England's Central Finance Board.

Peter Churchill was not the only British teenager involved with the young Krishnamurti who, according to Mrs Besant's pronouncement, had been chosen for the reincarnation of Christ. Sir Edwin Lutyens, responsible for expressing the splendour of the British in India through the medium of architecture, complained to Sir Roderick Jones, Enid Bagnold's husband, that his daughter, Mary Lutyens, had become too entangled with Mrs Besant's religion. The 50 year old Sir Roderick met the 19 year old Mary who wrote that it was 'The beginning of a friendship that was to change my life radically.' The lovers met in London every day and at weekends Mary rode on the Sussex Downs with her older admirer, and more than Rottingdean guffawed at Mary who, when asked which horse she intended to saddle at the weekend, replied, 'Roderick is going to mount me.'

Nearly 50 years later, Enid Bagnold shocked the village by boasting in press interviews that when she was young, Frank Harris, the 'Prince of Scoundrels' had mounted her at the Cafe Royal. If Canon Walters was correct in saying that in 50 years Enid had never given a penny to his parish church, I knew her as a most generous friend of Peter Harris and other blind men, and she was certainly delighted when her actress friend offered to do the mounting on the paralysed Peter in Ovingdean Church.

When I first arrived in Wales during 1944, Lloyd George was still alive but no longer leader of the Liberal Party, although Sir Percy Harris remained in the House of Commons to keep Liberal views before the public eye, while his wife, Jesus Chutney, to keep the public eye from seeing any letters about the sale of honours via Maundy Gregory and his blackmailing lovers, came to Cardiff after Willie Pethybridge died, to ensure that his sisters Alice and

Mabel, had destroyed all such letters. She naturally saw much of Professor William Gruffydd who was in love with Mrs Eric Payne who would bear my son in 1948. Thirty years later, the Liberal Party had a moment of glory when they made a pact with the Labour Party. On 7 September 1979 I wrote to Bishop Kemp, 'The Attorney General was Mr Sam Silkin, and very wisely you have asked your legal advisers to use my open-letter to Mr Silkin in your documentary pleadings. Was Attorney General Silkin simply trying to frighten me about my row with 10 Downing Street over Harold Wilson's Honours Lists? As the pleadings before the court show, I met the would-be lord over 30 years ago. Had the famous churchman/politician troubled to read the widely published opinions of his parliamentary colleagues on me and my family, he would have known that I was the very last person who would have helped him (or anyone else) to get a peerage.'

When Diana Pelham became co-heiress with her sister to the ancient Churchill titles in 1948, the Labour Party had swept Churchill out and so great was their majority in the Commons that the Left-wingers rumbled on and on about abolishing the House of Lords. In view of Tom Driberg's abuse of his wife and the way he got the court biased against the two out-of-work miners by using the name of Lord Sysonby of St James's Palace, I strongly objected to him and his friends posing as the conscience of the Left while asking my help in procuring seats for them in the House of Lords.

Driberg's folie-de-grandeur over his importance as a churchman made him think that the Labour government should appoint him as Minister to the Holy See even though that diplomatic post had a retiring age which Tom had long passed. He did, however, have an experience unique among Anglicans of the Vatican's workings. In 1939 the **Daily Express** sent him to Rome for a papal funeral where he met his friend Sir Hugh Walpole, the novelist, and in **Ruling Passions** Driberg wrote, 'he claimed, a handsome attendant at the Borghese gallery had insisted on pinning him against a wall and buggering him.'

This seemed strange to me since Walpole had organised demonstrations against James Hanley's **Boy** in 1934 that led to a successful obscenity prosecution. In that novel Hanley tells of a 13-year-old boy working in the docks and then stowing away on a merchant ship to Alexandria where he is raped by a steward on board. The **Times** in 1961 linked my book **Up Spake The Cabin Boy**, with Hanley's work although before then James's son Liam had been my companion to the India Club to eat and drink with Bridget Tunnard and his uncle, Gerald Hanley who stayed at the club on his visits to London from Ireland where he still lives.

Northern Ireland's sectarian troubles led Driberg to comment that the 'best maidenspeech I ever heard, was Bernadette Devlin (now Mrs McAliskey).'

My support for Miss Devlin's One Man One Vote campaign had been published in the press as had my objection to Sir Knox Cunningham's crude criticism of her maiden speech. Walpole's sexual encounter may or may not have been a figment of Driberg's sexual mania but his humiliation of his wife was real enough, and Driberg had more sense than to make the Borghese gallery sort of claim about Knox Cunningham. That former heavyweight champion of Cambridge University did join Ian Paisley's **Protestant Telegraph**, an outlet for lurid tales of Vatican sex life, bigotry and frustration.

Ian Paisley chose some important windmills to tilt at such as Cardinal Suenens of Belgium and Pope Paul VI. I wrote to Bishop Kemp on the matter, 'Thank you for your latest letter. Because you are the Anglican bishop most concerned with acknowledgement of the Pope's supremacy naturally you feel concern with allegations of homosexuality in the Pope which have forced His Holiness to issue a writ in the matter. Some of Mgr Hugh Montgomery's letters to me contained remarks that the Papal Chamberlain had to write to His Holiness explaining the situation. It was Douglas Woodruff, the chairman of Associated Catholic Newspapers who was obliged to publish an account of this exchange of letters with the Pope. In the end, the Pope had no alternative but to issue a writ to try and stop the allegations of homosexuality.'

Then I met Bishop Kemp in London. Amongst those who questioned me about my open-letter to Attorney General Silkin on his abuse of the legal system, an abuse condemned by the Tory opposition, were law students who expected Silkin to send the police to me with a summons for criminal libel. But that would have entailed a major trial and scandal for people such as Lord Chancellor Elwyn Jones who had earlier encouraged my open-letter writing by vetting them for the Labour Party and who knew the Lib-Lab Pact to be already severely shaken by the scandal over Jeremy Thorpe and the male model Norman Scott.

Some of the students came from Sierra Leone and held a yearly church service close to my home in North London. They asked Bishop Kemp to give the address because they regarded him as the churchman with the most experience of their homeland and the problems of coloured people in English communities. They were particularly concerned about Churchwarden Thomas's attack on the Indian students from Sussex University which figured prominently in the High Court action.

The 'Great Vicar - Me Row' had started with Enid Bagnold, but when I met Bishop Kemp in London, she was 90-years-old and totally dependent on morphia and had given up her Rottingdean home, though before that, Canon Walters had also left the village which had been the setting for the great Him-Us row, and as he was not seeking another living, Bishop Kemp could hardly expect a non-stop flow from his central church funds to cover the

alarming and ever-increasing High Court costs. Moreover, the two principal antagonists in the Indian racist aspect of the action, Churchwarden Thomas and Peter Churchill, could not go into the witness box because they were both now dead.

Bishop Kemp had delighted me when he brought that Hitler-defier and concentration camp survivor, Pastor Niemöller, to Chichester Cathedral for the opening of the Bishop George Bell Memorial there. In my letter of thanks, which the bishop set before the court, I told how I had been involved with Lonsdale Bryans's war-time group which wanted Paster Niemöller's release from the concentration camp in exchange for Hess's release from his Abergavenny prison. I prepared my List of Witnesses and the clerk of the court handed it to Mr Justice Jupp so that the judge could determine how long the jury might expect to be on the case, and he could see that my list included Bishop Kemp who I wanted to question about the many documents he had set down for the court's deliberation. But the press cuttings before the jury over which Attorney General Silkin had taken no action, showed that my most important witness was Anthony Blunt. But although Blunt felt that Prime Minister Thatcher had betrayed his immunity by confirming to the Commons that he had been a Russian spy, there was no possibility of him explaining to the crowded press benches how Lonsdale Bryans had acted as the envoy of the German Resistance in 1940. Both British and American governments had placed an embargo on the Hess papers until AD 2017 and I would not be allowed to break the embargo, and certainly not over a trifling matter such as the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

One of Hitler's most determined opponents in the 1930s was Ulrich von Hassel, the German Ambassador to the Quirinal in Rome who also became one of Lonsdale Bryans's firmest allies. When Evan Tredegar dressed up to accompany the Pope to St Peter's, Lonsdale and Mgr Montini met in closed session to discuss the question of the Jews. On the eve of his election as Pope Paul VI in 1963 Montini had been writing to **The Tablet** magazine to defend Pius XII against the allegations of Rolf Hochhuth, the German playwright. Eventually my friend Alec Randall was commissioned to write a defence of Pius XII and he consulted his former First Secretary in the 1930s, Hugh Montgomery, at length.

After his proclamation as Pope Paul VI certain members of the press fired salvos at Montini for being 'autocratic and one entered his palace in Milan on tiptoe.' Hugh Montgomery immediately responded in the **Westminster Cathedral Chronicle**, 'This seems to be ridiculous and I certainly felt no need to tread delicately when going to see him. I was always welcomed in the kindest and most affectionate manner and put completely at my ease.'

Even after the 1967 Abse Bill nobody could say that 'homosexuality never created any scandal' in England as in Italy during the 1950s when Prince Doria's nephew, Manolo Borromeo accused his old friend, Luchino Visconti, to his face of 'Being a Communist with servants in white gloves.' Gaia Servadio wrote that after the war the famous film-maker's 'way of life and homosexuality never created any scandal, but his joining the Communist ranks provoked resentment. Communism was still a dirty word in those circles.' Visconti the Communist had his own 'battalion of menservants at home 'in the 1950s, just as his friend Evan Tredegar, the Welsh Tory, had in the 1930s when Hugh Montgomery and Mgr Montini were minor diplomats in Rome amazed at Evan's incompatible roles as Papal Chamberlain and black magician. The two well-known homosexuals from Paris, the American priest Mgr Hemmick and Sir Francis Rose never got invitations to join Hugh Montgomery at Archbishop Montini's table in Milan. After Montini became Pope Paul VI, and certain members of the press fired salvos, so also did an American writer, Joseph Hocking, who specialised in Vatican scandals, and amongst the newspapers that serialized these lurid stories was Ian Paisley's **Protestant Telegraph** which Sir Knox Cunningham QC, MP supported.

Cunningham knew Hugh Montgomery as the son of an Ulster Protestant general, Hugh being disinherited on becoming a Catholic. I knew Hugh as a European scholar in outlook and manner who spoke many languages and had been a most trusted British diplomat before becoming a priest under the influence of the future Pope Paul VI. Hugh never ducked issues and this led to his unfortunate sword-crossing with Mgr Hemmick, well described by many as 'an old Vatican gossip.' Hugh told me how disturbed Pope Paul had been by Ian Paisley's allegations in Belfast and by Mgr Hemmick's gossip which got into the German press.

By 1980 when Mr Justice Jupp sat reading the letters I wrote to Bishop Kemp about the totally untrue allegations in the **Protestant Telegraph** and the German press, both Pope Paul VI and Hugh Montgomery were also dead. The jury and press benches listened in amazement as the judge announced that I had agreed to abandon the trial. He did not, however, announce that I had done so because Anthony Blunt could not be called as a witness. Also, yet another of my witnesses could not be called. This was one of Blunt's Cambridge ex-friends, Hugh Benham, who had been a legal adviser to the Church Commissioners at the time of the dispute over the sale of Adeline de la Feld's jewels but who had also died, in Morocco and in suspicious circumstances. I knew that more than one journalist, Barrie Penrose of the **Sunday Times**, would take the courtroom story further.

Not until 30 March 1988, however, ten years after Pope Paul VI's death, did the **Daily Telegraph** reveal under the headline, 'Tormented Pope's

Fear' how the Pope had told his Jesuit confessor, Father Paolo Dezzo, how often he had considered abdication. The only pope who ever took such a drastic step was Celestine V, elected in July 1294 and who abdicated five months later. The church canonised this holy man in 1313 and his tomb in central Italy became the scene of pilgrimage ever since. Because Paul VI went to pray at St Celestine's tomb many saw this as a sign of his own impending abdication. The press scandals had deeply wounded him. Cardinal Silvio Oddi also confirmed in the Vatican press that Paul VI 'was tormented by the idea of abdication.'

In 1987 Ken Livingstone questioned Prime Minister Thatcher in the House of Commons about the Kincora Boys Home scandal and its official cover-up. She replied that if he had new evidence he should take it to the police. Afterwards, Livingstone gave his press interview with Liam Clarke, saying I was the source of his information, and this pleased me immensely because I wanted an examination in public of my letters from which Livingstone was quoting. But Livingstone certainly did not take Mrs Thatcher's reply about the prosecuting authorities seriously, because to have done so would have brought even greater misfortune on former Attorney General Sam Silkin whom the High Court judges did not want on their benches which he had been so severely criticised for abusing.

Silkin had made an unsuccessful attempt to stop by injunction the publication of diaries written by his former colleague Dick Crossman. At the time of the 1970s Rottingdean affair Silkin had clashed with the Master of the Rolls, Lord Denning, about whether Silkin, as Attorney General, had higher rights in law to safeguard the public interest in deciding whether to prosecute. He certainly believed himself to have 'higher hands' than Bishop Kemp in ordering a prison Order to be placed on my unconscious body even though I had not been heard in court.

But Silkin's greatest crisis with the law courts arose when he advised Clay Cross councillors not to implement Tory rate rises. This dangerous precedent prompted the Tory MP, John Nott, to suggest that Silkin should be awarded the 'Clay Cross' for his services to Socialism. In 1947 I became secretary to Pope O'Mahony, Counsel to the all-party Irish Political Prisoners' Association for I was particularly interested in the vile breach of human rights practised by Stalin, Hitler and other dictators and by the British government who euphemistically called it 'internment without trial.' In 1963 Sir Knox Cunningham QC asked to have all reference to internment without trial removed from my book *Ulster*. In 1977 I was taken from a hospital ward in Brighton to Pentonville Prison without my case having been heard.

But Attorney General Silkin could not possibly allow the courts, with an eager press in attendance, to hear witnesses tell why they made malicious

telephone calls to young children about their mother's lover being a Cabinet Minister who, according to one reporter, also engaged in affairs with call-girls. It was hardly a secret that the mother was a distinguished barrister's wife and daughter of a well-known figure in Parliament, because all the names had already appeared during 1963 in the affidavits carried into the High Court by Mr Brian Dillon QC. The same names would be placed by others before Mr Justice French in 1991.

What did get into the press and subsequently into the spy-books was that in 1951 as a John Murray editor, George Kinnaird had dealt with the memoirs of Baroness Agnes De Stoekel, *All Is Not Vanity*. This lady had featured in the Tsar of Russia's household but by 1950 lived in Coppins Cottage next door to her friend and relative of the Tsar, Princess Marina of Kent who in the 1930s replaced Lady Bridget Parsons in Prince George's affection. Coppins had also been the home of Lady Jane Churchill and Peter Churchill wrote of his godmother Queen Victoria, driving over to Coppins to see his grandmother, Lady Jane, with confidential letters. In the same year as old Agnes De Stoekel regaled George Kinnaird and me with stories about Adeline de la Feld turning up at the Imperial Court before the Russian Revolution, George had stunned society by marrying Lady Elizabeth, the novelist daughter of the Earl of St Germans, an unlikely marriage not surprisingly dissolved in 1963 when law courts in Morocco and England saw that George's real spouse was a man, the former belly-dancer called The Gorilla who could satisfy the masochist in George.

The press made much of these goings-on as well as reporting the steamier scenes of vicarage life, of clergy exporting antique furniture and importing drugs to share with their altar-boys. I belonged to the Brighton set because Hermione Baddeley and I were old buddies from the past not only with Maurice Berkeley but also with Derek Waterlow who was the first policeman I met in London in 1944 and who composed the music to my lyric *The Boys at the Pakenham*. Hermione did not need many glasses of champagne before she and I started singing old numbers which many believed Noel Coward had written without having heard the recordings of *The Big Smoke*, and she never tired of speculating about Elvira Barney, the KNIGHT'S DAUGHTER ON MURDER CHARGE, who walked free from the Old Bailey. Hermione and I talked of Francis Rose's latest victims termed 'killings' by Cecil Beaton, and the suicides we suspected of being murders by poisoning.

The priest who presided over Hermione's domestic matinees and soirees while the champagne flowed was Father Colin Gill who himself had sent-up the Oxford gay scene in the 1920s, as the Poet Laureate, Sir John Betjeman, later recorded. When Father Colin departed, the scene came under

the influence of Father Paul de Fortis, and on 4 January 1992 the **Daily Telegraph** reported Paul's death, 'As a young man, he left the Roman Catholic church because he felt its stance was unsympathetic and he became a familiar figure in London's homosexual community.' When AIDS became an international menace, Bishop Eric Kemp got news coverage by recommending individual Holy Communion glasses, similar to those we used at the Barry School of Evangelism. But it was Father de Fortis, as chaplain of Middlesex Hospital, who gave actual comfort to AIDS sufferers.

While open about his homosexuality, Father de Fortis could not and did not speak so freely about the way he satisfied his own sexual desires. Gay crucifixions took place on Hampstead Heath and Anglican churches had masochistic priests wanting to be tied to church pillars and whipped by young sailors and Guardsmen. It seems there might even be a physical as well as a psychological connection between tying-up and sexual arousal seen for example, in some French records of 1823 about the bodies of 14 men hanged simultaneously all showing genital excitement. Just before going to celebrate Midnight Mass in his Hampstead church, Father de Fortis chained his hands and feet to his four-poster bed and strangled himself on a metal collar.

Such a death doubtless surprises some people more than others, but it shocks even the cynical, although I found equally disturbing the psychological beatings which drove young women to suicide through such things as the malicious telephone calls and delivery of coffins in the night which I and a dozen neighbours described in our 1963 affidavits which my Counsel, Brian Dillon QC, took into the High Court. By the time these matters reached Mr Justice French's court in 1991 the documents which others made public included the Cabinet Minister's correspondence with me showing clearly how I discussed with former Prime Minister Macmillan the affair between his wife, Lady Dorothy, and Robert Boothby. Supremac certainly did not rush to the Divorce Court when Lady Dorothy bore Boothby's daughter. The sort of thing to which Macmillan and I objected were the vicious, anonymous letters about 'A Statesman's Dilemma' which Sir Maurice Bowra wrote for political gain, but had not the courage to sign.

In the March 1952 issue of **The Radleian**, Colonel E H Whitfield wrote, 'No doubt many, far more qualified than I will wish to write something about Ernest Bryans. I venture, however, to submit a few lines not so much because I have known him well and kept in touch with him since 1907 but because, during the last four years, I have visited him several times at No 87 Banbury Road. I last saw him on July 27th and was due to see him again on October 24th. I was not in his Social but I was in his Form, when he took Army Form "A", and it was entirely due to his influence and drive that I managed to pass into Sandhurst. Perhaps the "drive" was the more effective of the two

and, in my case, this included extra work on every half-holiday evening in his study! There is no doubt that he was a very good teacher, perhaps especially in history... So much for the past. Up till about two years ago Mr Bryans had not really altered much since those far-off days. His hand-writing was as distinctive as ever, his memory for names and facts quite amazing. He retained his delightful sense of humour and, in July, he told me, in his own inimitable way, how his "charwoman" had scoffed half a bottle of his whisky and been found lying on the floor quite incapable.'

Otto Mundy also called regularly on Ernest Bryans at 87 Banbury Road in Oxford, and like Colonel Whitfield spent many hours alone in his schoolmaster's study at Radley. Aspects of history they talked about were those written by Otto's godfather and namesake, Rt Hon Sir George Otto Trevelyan MP, the politician and author who wrote **What Does She Do With It?**, an attack on the vast sum allocated in the Civil List to the royal family, a work that sparked off the most serious republican movement in Queen Victoria's long reign. Trevelyan, of course, had to publish his attack anonymously, since he had already been one of Her Majesty's Lords of the Admiralty and, after the 1871 publication, would kiss the Queen's hand on taking higher office in the Cabinet.

Otto Mundy lacked the literary ability shown by another of Ernest's pupils, Frank Shelley-Mills, who summed up the relationship in one line, 'A willing prisoner there I lay beneath your limbs.' On retiring from Customs and Excise Otto returned, like Ernest Bryans, to Oxford where he umpired more than cricket matches for Sir Maurice Bowra, Warden of Wadham College. Since I ghosted many of Otto's broadsides, I was able to inform Prime Minister Macmillan which dog was biting dog, although bitches caused the dog-fights much less often than homosexual anger over who stole whose boyfriends.

Student revolts spread from Paris to London, from Oxford to Denmark in the late 1960s. After I spoke at meetings that went into early morning, I was asked to write my views as an open-letter for my friend Billy Hoskins of whom the **Daily Telegraph** wrote on 14 January 1992, 'Professor W G Hoskins, who has died aged 83, was the pioneering interpreter of the English landscape, a great local historian of the Midlands and of his native West Country, and a champion of "common land".' Although I enjoyed being asked to dine at All Souls, Oxford, by Billy Hoskins I thought of him mainly as a Devon man, born in Exeter where he became a Liberal city councillor in the 1960s and ran into problems that dragged on and on in the law courts and he 'retired in despair' as he termed it in his Who's Who entry.

Billy advised me to let his counsel, Louis de Pinna, deal with a gagging writ I got over my open-letter to Oxford students who marched on All Souls.

Billy died in 1992 survived by those dons he mentioned in letters to me which are not complimentary about them. Just as Sir John Betjeman became a household name, so did his friend Billy Hoskins through his BBC Television series *Landscapes of England*. Betjeman wrote, 'Hoskins founded a school of what might be called historicotopographical studies, which puts the old inhuman guide book with its arid cataloguing into the cemetery where it should have long been buried. It also puts to shame the inconsequent and twaddly ramblings of the scribbler out to capture "charm" and local colour.'

Billy Hoskins's Devon landscape assumed a sinister aspect when the Devon MP and Liberal Leader, Jeremy Thorpe, went on trial over his relationship with the former male model, Norman Scott. Mr Justice Lawson conducted the trial of Andrew Newton, an airline pilot who killed Scott's dog. When researching their book *The Pencourt File*, Barrie Penrose and Roger Courtiour went to see Lord Stow Hill QC, a former Labour Home Secretary, who said 'that Jeremy (Thorpe) had a problem with a young man who was making allegations of a homosexual relationship. It was my advice that they treat the young man rough. Do not allow him to get any hold over Jeremy. I remember saying: "Tell him to go to Hell: Get rid of him quick".'

Some months after presiding over Andrew Newton's trial, Mr Justice Lawson was not listening to what happened when newspaper reporters interviewed former Home Secretary, Lord Stow Hill, about the plot to get rid of Norman Scott 'quick'. Instead, the judge was reading in open court my open-letters which had been vetted by both Lord Stow Hill and by the then Lord Chancellor, Elwyn Jones. The Jeremy Thorpe trial did nothing to relieve pressures on the pact with the Liberals to keep Labour in power and Elwyn Jones on the Woolsack. More than Professor Hoskins 'retired in despair' over the corruption rife in politics. However, the Chancellor of Oxford University, Harold Macmillan, took the opposite view, and politics continued to intoxicate him even after he ceased to be Prime Minister.

Maurice Bowra attacked Macmillan as part of a game they played, for as Prime Minister in 1960 Mac knew the acute embarrassment Bowra suffered from being short statured. When a Wadham student appeared in court after being caught on the canal bank having sex with a mechanic, Maurice Bowra had to represent the college, and when the judge ordered Bowra to stand up, he replied, 'I am standing up,' to loud laughter in court. And this was the unforgivable sin - to be laughed at. That other academic, Lord Annan wrote of Bowra, 'Towards the end of his life he disapproved of the view on universities, students, literature and the law which John Sparrow was expressing, and both envied and feared the Warden of All Souls' reckless propensity to say or do anything. But he remained obsessed by Sparrow's personality...'

Sparrow shared Claude Soman's obsession for other people's long hair, but whereas Claude snipped tresses as a sexual fetish, Sparrow did it out of spite for long-haired radical students who wanted All Souls to admit undergraduates rather than the exclusive clique of Fellows who appeared at weekends, if at all, to spend the college fortune on wining and dining. Sparrow loved going to parties and pulling out his scissors to snip at the 'weirdies and beardies.' But it was his performance at the Lady Chatterley obscenity trial in 1960 that earned Sparrow his laurels. The Bishop of Woolwich declared the novel's celebrated sexual act as 'natural' and likened it to Holy Communion, but the Warden of All Souls called it 'Sodomy.'

Misogynist Sparrow kept up his campaign to prevent women from becoming Fellows of All Souls, and especially he did not want blue-stockings such as Joan Robinson, the Cambridge economist. For years he told the press that no woman would be admitted except over his dead body or he would resign his own fellowship. But women did get into All Souls after Macmillan became Chancellor, and Sparrow did not resign. Adeline de la Feld and I were acquainted with two authors in John Sparrow's inner coterie, Harold Nicolson and James Pope-Hennessy. Nicolson wrote to Raymond Mortimer that, 'the idea of a gentleman of birth and education sleeping with a guardsman is repugnant to me.' He also wrote to his son after swimming in a ship's pool, 'I wish I had not this physical aversion from Jews and coloured people... I think (they) should be forbidden to bathe for they poison the water.' The Hon Sir Harold Nicolson peppered his conversation as he did his letters with interjections such as, 'He must be a Jew - oily,' and 'What liars these Jews are.'

So much for that gentleman of birth and education who, although himself repugnant, was at least open about his views. Nicolson felt so proud of the academic standing of his old Oxford college, Balliol, that he sent his two sons there also. That pride was shared by Lonsdale Bryans who stayed with his grand relations at Schloss Derneburg while Nicolson was a British diplomat in Berlin meeting Emil Ludwig whom he dismissed as 'a pretentious little Jew.' As a leading High Churchman T S Eliot tried to distance himself from his anti-Semitic past, but not so the leading snob, the no-Guardsmen, no-Jews, no 'beastly nigger' in bed, Sir Harold Nicolson.

On 6 November 1942 Nicolson went with Lady Kitty Lambton and others to lunch with the Churchills at 10 Downing Street when Lady Lambton told the Prime Minister that he owed nothing to his father's Churchill blood, but everything to his American mother's side which had produced a genius such as Shane Leslie. Winston responded, 'I am proud, very proud of my American blood, but do not impute Shane to me.'

Three of Rosa Lewis's favourites at the Cavendish Hotel before the war were Sir Shane Leslie, Viscount Tredegar and the Hon George Kinnaird.

Winston liked it when Kinnaird lent his Brighton home to Sarah Churchill for her marriage to the fortune-hunting Lord Audley, but disliked it when Tredegar got the Pope to annul the Duke of Marlborough's marriage. Winston also disliked the Irish Nationalist politics of his cousin Shane Leslie. Nevertheless, from those acrimonious relationships Churchill derived the friendship of Evan Tredegar's protege, Brendan Bracken and later, of course, made him the wartime Minister of Information. And no wonder, for Bracken indeed had choice tit-bits of information on offer, such as the facts about the homosexual goings-on of those two Etonian friends, Evan Tredegar and Lonsdale Bryans, in 1930s Berlin, facts which could be used in getting the British government to oppose Lonsdale's peace missions, an opposition made easier still after the untimely wartime publication of Lonsdale's *Curve of Fate*.

But was 1951 any more timely for his *Blind Victory*? Lonsdale details the numbers of Germans opposed to Hitler who were executed but he conspicuously avoids examining the numbers who perished in the Holocaust. Lonsdale's 'buck-nigger' kind of talk shows him to have been every bit as racist as Nicolson's obsession with anti-Semitism. If Nicolson did not like 'rough trade' in his bed, James Pope-Hennessy did, and indeed got murdered by his last rough pick-up. James was a younger 'Balliol chap' who loved keeping-up with Oxford's gay-biting-gay scene.

Warden Sparrow of All Souls shared his London home with Harold Nicolson and drove off to Italy with young Pope-Hennessy. On the way, Sparrow lost his temper and boxed James on the ears. Nicolson afterwards wrote of how James turned on Sparrow, accusing him of being 'A failure at the Bar, a failure in the Army, and regarded not only by All Souls, but by the whole University with contempt and dislike. I have always wondered how it came that you have deteriorated into a figure of fun. Now I know.'

Oxford University's contempt for Sparrow rested much on the absurdity of his writings about other homosexuals' taste, as I wrote in my open-letter to the long-haired, rebel students. Besides using press accounts of Sparrow's specious outbursts I also had access to tape-recordings of other people claiming that because T S Eliot was a literary genius then he must therefore be practising homosexuality. Sparrow grew alarmed when he heard of these tapes and referred to them in letters before the High Court. Adeline de la Feld and I tolerated Pope-Hennessy until Bridget Parsons attacked his colleague, Anthony Blunt. Pope-Hennessy's attitude to women differed from both that of Sparrow and Nicolson. For many years theatrical and literary enclaves were dominated by the lesbian trio, Edie Craig, Christopher St John and Tony Attwood, all three regarding Nicolson's wife, Vita Sackville-West, as important in their lives. When Edie Craig died, Vita Sackville-West and Erica Marx did

much to comfort the grief-stricken Christopher and Tony who lived at the Priest's House outside Tenterden in Kent, elderly ladies given a nickname by Harold Nicolson in a letter to his wife, 'Why are you such an angel to the Trouts.' Certainly Hugh Benham and I preferred going to see the Trouts at the ancient Priest's House rather than watching Harold Nicolson or Gilbert Laithwaite displaying their latest affairs at the Travellers' Club.

On 1 November 1989 Anna Pollak wrote to me, 'Christopher St John and Tony Attwood I met in my first year with Erica. Tony was in her 90s. A few years ago I researched the story of this Trio to get Channel 4 to make a documentary on them. I have an intriguing book about them and their life "around" Ellen Terry and of course there are enough of Tony's oils about to colour a good Kentish story.'

The land around the Priest's House belonged to the Forbes-Tweedie family with whom I stayed in 1953 when Christopher was writing her latest book, a biography of Ethel Smyth who composed *March of the Women* which she conducted with a toothbrush in Holloway Prison where her militant campaigning for women's suffrage landed her. That jail sentence drew Adeline de la Feld into Dame Ethel's battle for lesbians to have every right to be called geniuses in defiance of Warden Sparrow's ridiculous writing.

My last call at the Priest's House was to see Christopher's newest amendment to her book telling how Ethel Smyth got out of bed and, although not as heavy as Christopher, crashed through her commode and died. John Sparrow had his version of it to embarrass Vita Sackville-West and Bridget Parsons whose brother, Michael Rosse, kept up his connection with Sparrow from the days of the Bright Young People. Sparrow wrote, 'In the old days the Oxford student presented the classic image of youth, clean limbed and fresh complexioned, decent in dress and graceful in bearing. Today, his place has been taken by a new breed of adolescent, shock-headed and dishevelled...'

Not only did the hard-up dishevelled students feel outraged when the wealthy Warden of the wealthy All Souls forcibly tried to cut their long hair, but also when Sparrow name-dropped his famous friends in the legal profession whom he would get to put the rebels down. In my 1963 High Court action which I took to protect the families of Sparrow's old Oxford friends, the affidavits carried into court by Mr Brian Dillon QC, now Lord Justice Dillon, contained evidence about malicious telephone calls and coffins arriving in the night. When I lived in Sussex during the 1970s, my weekend friends in London included senior consultants from King Edward's Hospital, Ealing, and we went to see opera together, mixing there with High Court judges. One judge went regularly to visit his mother who lived with my sister Margaret in Hove. When others wrote that malicious telephone calls were interfering with emergency line to hospitals, John Sparrow grew angry, not

at the calls, but at the fact that the makers of the calls had been found out. The powerful Warden of All Souls might pull out scissors to assault long-haired students, but with all his influence he could not get an injunction to stop me writing about his simpering claims linking genius and homosexuality.

As well as the Rev Colin Gill, the Oxford depicted in John Betjeman's **Summoned By Bells** also recalls, 'Sparrow with his cowlick lock of hair/ And schoolboy looks./ Stands a young contrast to his antique books/ On wall, floor, table, window seats and chair.' Father Gill brought a student to my home ostensibly to see Peter Churchill but actually to find and steal my tape-recording of an All Souls Fellow discussing Sparrow's opinions. Sparrow was most anxious to obtain and suppress that tape, but he did not get it because it was in the safe at Barclays Bank and shortly afterwards the student killed himself when Father Gill got a new boyfriend. But with too much drink taken, Sparrow never hesitated to use the phone or any other means to intimidate those who dared to ridicule his absurd writing.

In 1977, after reading that I was in a coma, Sparrow was told to his immense relief that I had died. On 19 May 1977, shortly after my reported 'death,' somebody who identified himself as John Sparrow phoned the **Daily Telegraph** at 2.30am and said that Harold Macmillan had collapsed and died after dining with him. Next morning Sparrow denied making the call. Macmillan, of course, had not died and lived for another nine years, dining out on the story and quoting what Mark Twain said after a similar incident, that reports of his death were much exaggerated. Was it Sparrow who phoned the **Daily Telegraph**, or somebody else? When Sparrow himself died in January 1992, in the same month as Billy Hoskins, the **Daily Telegraph** said of the Macmillan hoax, 'Some maintain that the mischievous Sparrow was himself the hoaxer - the editor attached a pointed note to his published letter, "The Warden had a disturbed night," it said. "He also received two check calls from this office. It was a night of hoax calls in Fleet Street".' In view of other malicious phone calls, there is no doubt in my mind that Sparrow, much the worse for a night's drinking at All Souls, did tell the **Daily Telegraph** at 2.30am that Macmillan had died and was too sober next day to own up to it.

The hoax on the University Chancellor occurred only a short time before Sparrow was 'exiled (as he felt it) to a college flat in Iffley,' as the **Daily Telegraph** wrote. A flat in the suburbs at Iffley was indeed a long way from the spacious Warden's Lodge at All Souls, but even more galling for Sparrow was Oxford Municipal Council's long lease of the splendid mansion, Headington Hall, to one of Harold Nicolson's and John Sparrow's special hates, Robert Maxwell the publisher. Maxwell was not a 'gentleman of birth and education' in the Nicolson sense but only 'a Jew - oily.'

Over the years, when Jack Sarch and I discussed the Holocaust and the

possibility of its prevention through German Resistance/Lonsdale Bryans peace missions, we often talked of press hostility to Maxwell, who lost so many of his working-class family in Hitler's massacre of the Jews. Jack Sarch is now dead, but not so the two lawyers who visited me at Robert Maxwell's request to ask me about the anti-Semitic campaign Sparrow and his friends conducted against Maxwell. While the lawyers and I taked at my home, Robert Maxwell was already sailing to his death in the Canary Islands. I was shocked to read of the last hoax played by Fleet Street on Maxwell by 'the good offices of conman Joe Flynn' to quote **Private Eye**.

Anthony Blunt, the English gentleman of 'birth and education' went free and was feted by the Establishment whereas George Blake got 42 years for the same crime of spying for the Russians. Blunt's smugness over it angered me nearly as much as the actual injustice. And John Sparrow took the same attitude as Blunt's when he saw the life of the Jewish refugee, Robert Maxwell, dissected in the press over the years as though his body did indeed 'poison the water,' to quote Harold Nicolson. By using his employees' pension funds to paper over the cracks in his crumbling newspaper empire, Robert Maxwell behaved criminally, which English gentlemen may do with impunity but not Jewish immigrants. I knew that even bigger fortunes had been stolen by people other than the Princess Carlos de Rohan which might have saved Robert Maxwell's family from the Holocaust along with millions of Europe's Jews. But papers to do with this are so embarrassing even today, 50 years after the Holocaust, that the British and American governments have put their embargo on the papers until 2017, as I discussed with Maxwell's lawyers on the eve of his death.

John Sparrow was a rich barrister's son, and aptly wrote in one of his better verses, 'Here, with his talents in a napkin hid,/ Lies one who much designed, and nothing did...' except make mischief and unhappiness for peasants such as Robert Maxwell who became a master of many languages and worked hard to live with his wife and children in Headington Hall. When Harold Macmillan made it plain that he regarded Prime Minister Thatcher as 'so common,' some people thought he too-easily forgot his peasant ancestry in the crofts of Scotland.

Naturally Sparrow expressed outrage at the publication of diaries kept by his most-enduring boyfriend, Harold Nicolson, which referred to James Pope-Hennessy's repeated outburst that Sparrow had 'deteriorated into a figure of fun.' Knowing full well, if not admitting as much, that there was truth in the allegation that he was 'regarded not only by All Souls, but by the whole University with contempt and dislike,' Sparrow sought a wider audience. He certainly could not become a scholarly television personality as the charming Billy Hoskins had done, so Sparrow went to America where he lectured on

such things as an extremely detailed description of a hanging, 'a policy which he warmly and repeatedly advocated - as well as an account of a flogging at an English public school' as stated in the **Daily Telegraph**. Many letters about how Sparrow ran All Souls were sent to me by its Fellows and High Court judges who held the same opinion as James Pope-Hennessy that Sparrow's views stirred up 'contempt and dislike.'

The question of sexual violence such as caning came up over a dinner table when a judge's wife explained the difficulty she had in getting American dollars for her children in America because of currency restrictions. She asked angrily if Sir John Foster QC MP, during a visit to Washington had used Parliamentary expenses to pay for costly kinky sex sessions, not in getting a public school flogging, so salaciously lectured on by Sparrow, but the services of a girl in black leather. So, in the long tradition of pamphleteering going back to Dean Swift, I wrote my attacks on the contemptible writings of Warden Sparrow and soon many judges and MPs were getting out their pens personally to address me, the envelopes of which became collectors' pieces with Post Office Trade Unionists who asked me to lecture to them about All Souls. Had Sparrow invited my students into All Souls and had openly debated there why he so strongly objected to Lord Franks's Commission which wanted to turn All Souls into a college for post-graduate studies, then the row would never have reached the law courts.

John Foster was one of Lonsdale Bryans's chums from the Eton/Oxford/Brooks Club set who questioned me about Warden Sparrow's authority on the work of Forrest Reid. While confined to bed by polio during the 1947 epidemic, I listened to the radio a lot and so heard a talk announced, 'This is the BBC Third Programme. The death of Forrest Reid, the Irish novelist and critic, was announced recently. Here is John Sparrow, to give an appreciation of his work.' The talk intrigued me so much that I got a transcription of it and Grace Hamilton added marginal notes, for she resented Sparrow's conjectural view that her 12-year-old brother Kenneth was having sex with Forrest Reid. Twenty-four years later I was explaining to Mr Justice Swanwick's open court my letters to John Sparrow and the warden's claim that Forrest Reid dedicated an early book to Henry James without the prior permission of Henry James, and James was upset about it.

I disliked Sparrow as a person and was not surprised to learn from Billy Hoskins and others how much of the university held him in contempt. I had few meetings with Sparrow who, like Hugh Montgomery, went to Winchester. But whereas Hugh found the flogging there degrading, Sparrow so adored the practice that even 50 years later he was lecturing about it in America. Hugh, however, remained on good terms with his former diplomatic colleague, Harold Nicolson, whom I sometimes met when Hugh was in London and

staying at the Travellers' Club.

Mario Dubsy joined us one evening, the young painter teaching at the Royal College of Art where Hugh's cousin, Sir Robin Darwin, was the principal. When Mario died of AIDS in 1985 **The Times** wrote, 'Talk was the essence with Dubsy and he did it well. The conflicts in his own life - lived often at an intense pitch - made his company uncomfortable, maddening, never insipid or uncaring, for underneath, people mattered to him more than any opinion or idea.' Ruth Lakofski and I had known Mario for many years battling with anti-Semitic opinions and I have never heard anyone savage the reactionary Warden Sparrow so decisively, as Dubsy did when Sparrow superciliously criticised Dubsy's art students for their exaggerated Flower Children dress and long hair.

When Hugh Montgomery pointed out that Flower Power was better than the thuggery practised in his day at Winchester, John Sparrow became thoroughly rattled since he had not read Ruth Lakofski on the leaders of the Flower Power movement who formed part of our set. To have the last word, Hugh wrote to the **Sunday Telegraph**, 'I do not suppose that Winchester was (or is?) any more brutal than most public schools though perhaps more devoted than some to old traditions, good and bad. In my days, there were, I believe, certain houses at Winchester, one in particular, where a clique of brutal or sadistic prefects had taken almost complete control and a kind of reign of terror ensued...But of one thing there can be no doubt and that is that to all civilised people outside the former privileged classes in Britain, the whole idea of older boys being permitted to punish younger ones in this manner is abhorrent; nor in these post-Freudian days should it be necessary to dwell on the effects which this custom can have on aggressors and victims alike...'

But that was what John Sparrow with his homosexual instincts for violence hated to read and he travelled as far as America in praise of English public school sado-masochism. Mario Dubsy had lived in New York as a Harkness Scholar and exhibited his paintings there and called his last book **Tom Pilgrim's Progress Among the Consequences of Christianity**. As the Warden of All Souls, founded by an Archbishop of Canterbury, Sparrow was not amused. How could he be? Time had somewhat blurred the distinction, if such a distinction had ever existed, between the Almighty and Wardens of All Souls College, Oxford. David Cate was the first Fellow to resign from All Souls since its foundation in 1438. Certainly the image of the college did not improve when the press reported a Fellow who strongly opposed the Warden and killed himself by jumping in front of a train.

As the Chancellor of Oxford University, Harold Macmillan waited in horror for Sparrow's next retirement blunder with pen or scissors. In his own

retirement as Prime Minister, Macmillan had time to talk to me about that other authority on the life of Forrest Reid. Harold Macmillan's family firm declined to publish the memoirs of his former PPS, Sir Knox Cunningham, and when I wrote to Macmillan on 19 January 1986, I said that 'posterity will have to read about him in books on E M Forster and Forrest Reid.' Some months later a biography on Ian Paisley came out recording Cunningham's work for the Protestant cause.

In 1966 I lived in Nova Scotia and the **Belfast Telegraph** asked me for an article about Ulster shipyard men working in Canada. Several friendly meetings took place at my home and Sam Campbell, who claimed relationship with my mother, particularly interested me and he asked to borrow my Campbell outfit to attend the local Highland Games. At that time one of my London publishers, Charles Monteith of Fabers, was offering me a contract for a book about pirates since scores of natural harbours along Nova Scotia's lonely coastline had given the sea-dogs shelter and secrecy.

Before leaving for Canada, Alan Giff had interviewed me and wrote, 'His close friend and publisher is another Ulsterman, Oxford don Charles Monteith, a director of Faber and Faber.' As a Fellow of All Souls, Monteith was closer still to John Sparrow whose Sub-Warden he became, and Fabers published All Souls Studies as well as Warden Sparrow's books and those of Sir Geoffrey Faber who for many years had been the Estates Bursar of All Souls. Those estates were vast and produced enormous revenue which my students thought, in line with Lord Franks's Commission, should support the setting-up of post-graduate research at All Souls. On 26 January 1992, the **Sunday Times** stated, 'Lord Franks pays affectionate tribute to Sparrow's Machiavellian manoeuvres in outflanking him. Franks remembers Sparrow saying to him: "We'll have women in All Souls before you can say Joan Robinson."' Many of my own students were women graduates who thought it wrong that Sparrow's misogyny should be allowed to obstruct academic development.

But Joan Robinson featured as a Cambridge economist and friend of Mao Tse-tung whereas Dame Helen Gardener enjoyed renown as an Oxford professor noted for her hard work in the lecture hall and books such as **The Art of T S Eliot** and **The Divine Poems of John Donne**. Warden Sparrow turned his spleen on Dame Helen because at the Lady Chatterley's trial people took her opinion more seriously than his. The Warden of All Souls commented spitefully that as Professor Gardener was a female virgin lacking essential experience of the all-important male organ, she did not know 'the facts of life.' Sparrow went on to embarrass her, twisting Milton's line to read 'These also serve who only stand and wait,' as implying 'erect male organs ready to mount.' Only I dared to say in public that of the two, Gardener and Sparrow,

it was the latter who did not know the facts of life since only a boy's bottom made him randy enough to mount.

The more serious elements of the press suggested that the first female Fellow of All Souls should be Oxford's Professor of the History of Science, Margaret Gowing, since she was the official historian on British War Economy, Atomic Energy, the Cabinet Office and other books of more substance and significance than Sparrow's sexual trivia. Margaret Gowing lived with her husband Donald and their two sons for many years in one of the houses designed by Edward Armitage in the grounds of Strand-on-the-Green House. Donald ran the Musicians' Benevolent Fund which maintains residential homes for elderly musicians. Before Ruth Armitage and I gave supper parties we would meet our guests for drinks in The Bull and Donald Gowing often joined us there and so I could pass on news of aged Irish musicians whom Peter Montgomery thought should get grants or be taken into one of the Fund's homes. As an experienced BBC conductor and founder of the Ulster Orchestra, Peter understood musicians' problems and was much involved with the family of Gervase Elwes, the tenor in whose memory the Musicians' Benevolent Fund was started in 1921.

The **Oxford Dictionary of Music** states Elwes was, 'First singer of Vaughan Williams's **On Wenlock Edge** (1909). Sang ten(or) songs in first performance in England of Mahler's **Das Lied von der Erde** (1914).' In my book **Ulster** I wrote of Peter Montgomery's close association with his cousin, Vaughan Williams, who set six of A E Housman's **A Shropshire Lad** poems with Elwes giving the favourite, **On Wenlock Edge**, its first performance. In **The Protege** I wrote of Housman's visits to Peter's other cousin, Otto Mundy, when Housman liked to write his poems by the River Thames.

As a schoolboy at Winchester, Sparrow had published his first book, and being on John Donne it pleased that other Donne authority, Evan Tredegar. Evan equally delighted in Sparrow's 1939 edition of Housman's collected poems, in the introduction of which Sparrow opined that Andrew Gow's biography of Gow's friend Housman was 'by far the best published account of Housman's career and of his personality.' But it was Anthony Blunt who interested himself in the aged Gow, while Sparrow took the side of Goronwy Rees against Blunt over Rees's disclosing in a Sunday newspaper about the homosexual and Russian spy connection of Guy Burgess. The Armitage tenants included Rees during the years of my attacks on Sparrow's written views and malicious telephone calls. I had shown Rees the affidavit Ruth Armitage wrote for the High Court concerning mischief-making calls on her telephone line during the hours that the line was needed for emergency calls from King Edward's Hospital at Ealing where Ruth was both chairman and senior consultant at the time.

Harold Macmillan's boyhood admirer, Father Ronnie Knox, had been succeeded as Roman Catholic Chaplain of Oxford University by Mgr Val Elwes, son of the famous tenor. After Ernest Bryans died in 1951, I usually stayed when in Oxford with Val Elwes at the Old Palace Chaplaincy, which had been the Bishop of Oxford's home in pre-Reformation times. As a former university chaplain, Hugh Montgomery liked to come from nearby Brailles by bus and join me for lunch at the Old Palace. Many of our fellow-guests had either been at Eton and/or Oxford with Evan Tredegar, and had, like Hugh Montgomery and Lonsdale Bryans, seen Evan in his black mass performances.

For eight years John Sparrow chose to be very flattering about my books. He liked to be regarded as a higher authority on John Donne than Helen Gardener and Evan Tredegar and certainly Otto Mundy approved of Sparrow's edition of Housman's poems by the number of copies Otto gave of the 1956 Penguin edition. He loved to gossip about gay 'marriages,' and next to his own partnership with Harold Nicolson, the most-enduring that he knew was the one between Harold's fellow-diplomat, Hugh Montgomery and that other 'F O Chap,' Sir Gilbert Laithwaite, who loved returning to his old college at Oxford, Trinity, of which he was an honorary Fellow. In my game with Sparrow, I always showed willingness to accept his supposedly superior knowledge in hopes that he would publish his opinions.

But Sparrow was quite wrong in thinking that Peter Montgomery and Donald Gowing were still physically in love with each other, so that when they went to the opera together they went dashing into the lavatory at every opportunity on Tom Driberg-style missions. Peter and Donald did indeed go frequently into the gents at the opera house as I knew from experience, but unlike Driberg, it was not to swallow semen but to drink whisky, as Sparrow would have known if he had seen them growing redder in face and more unsteady on feet as the evening proceeded. Indeed, no matter how fine a claret Ruth Armitage brought up from the cellar at Strand-on-the-Green House, it never satisfied Donald who had recourse to his whisky flasks, before and after the opera and in every interval.

Gervase Elwes's wife, Lady Winefride, the devoutest of the devout, served as National President of the Catholic Women's League, even after confinement to a wheelchair in which she wove perilously in and out of Oxford Street's traffic. Winefride's brothers and sisters had been missionaries while her children turned out to be not less holy. Her son Simon became a painter, and his brother, Richard, a High Court judge, both adoring to don their Knight of Malta mantles to serve cardinals and popes, while their far-from-robust brother Val went to face the rigours of life in a strict Carthusian monastery. One of John Sparrow's longest dining-out stories told how Lady Winefride beset the monastery and extricated Father Val.

Because of libel risk, I transformed Winefride into Mrs Lily Irwin, the Orange female leader of Co Fermanagh, when I wrote *Tattoo Lily*. In Ireland most people thought my comic heroine was Mrs Irwin, but *Tattoo Lily*'s siege of the monastery in my story was Lady Winefride in Sussex, as Sparrow knew when his, and my publishers, Fabers, brought out *Tattoo Lily* in 1961, dedicated to Patrick McClellan who still calls me Paddy from the days I took the stage name of Patrick O'Brien.

On 22 June 1965, Hugh Montgomery wrote to me, 'My dear Patrick O'Brien, So many thanks for your very nice letter. I am sure that His Bonnie Lordship will remember you when I recall your Southern name. I have always felt sorry for the Irish political prisoners. It was good of you to collect money for them in the Irish dance halls.' The Bonnie Earl was Lord Wicklow, but as Evelyn Waugh's diaries recall, in his youth at Oxford he had been Lord Clonmore who gave parties on a church roof and liked to whip boys' bottoms. He became an Anglican clergyman and then, like Waugh, Tredegar and Hugh, converted to Catholicism and reviewed my books in *The Tablet*.

My advantage over Sparrow lay in the telephone conversations I had with him under my pseudonym Christopher Charles Sheffield. This code name was given to me when Sparrow was at the War Office, and later became the Christian names of my son in 1948. On the telephone I always talked to Sparrow as Charles Sheffield and he would chat at length on the dreadful state into which Robin Bryans had got All Souls by supporting student insurrection and especially by fomenting discontent among female students who wanted to lay their menstrually contaminated hands on All Souls's riches for their studies.

I got a job lecturing for the British Council through the good offices of its chairman, General Sir Ronald Adam, whom I met when he and Bridget Parsons worked at the War Office where Jack Sparrow was the general's assistant on, of all things, the Morale Committee. But the war had ended when Sparrow started sharing a 'set' at the Albany off Piccadilly with Harold Nicolson whose lesbian wife annoyed Harold by giving so much time to 'The Trouts,' Christopher St John and Tony Attwood. Sparrow demanded that St John's biography of Ethel Smyth should contain his favourite story of the composer struggling into a birdcage behind a hedge, because she had no stays to put on when cycling to dinner with Vita Sackville-West's grand friends.

But Sparrow was better on gays than lesbians, and when in old age Wystan Auden went to a cottage in the grounds of his old college, Christ Church, earlier stories of his affair with Benjamin Britten were collected by the biographers. Sparrow liked to shock, and at a mere mention of Britten's *Turn of the Screw* would retort, 'Turn over to screw.' Talk of this opera, based on the story by Henry James, would then set Sparrow onto how Forrest

Reid dedicated a book to James which upset the American novelist. Listening to all this in Mr Justice Swanwick's court was Mr Brian Neill QC whose younger brother, Sir Patrick Neill QC, has now for long been Sparrow's successor as Warden of All Souls.

Sparrow brought a somewhat less frivolous scholarship to bear on the background of the 'Last Will and Testament' which Auden and Louis MacNeice put into *Letters from Iceland* in 1936. Sparrow's interpretation differed from mine which I not only wrote about but spoke about in my BBC memorial talk on Louis MacNeice, and which would come before the High Court. After a writ for libel is served, many procedures follow, step by step, culminating in open court at the trial when the documents are put before judge and jury. The most important of these steps, which are called interlocutory applications, is the Summons for Directions, which enables a Master-in-Chambers to see if proper preparations are made for the trial. As the Warden of the supposedly-most-elite college at Oxford, John Sparrow used his legal knowledge as a barrister to abuse the pre-trial steps and hence influence the trial. He was determined to have a gagging writ but no trial because if there was one before a judge and jury, as required in libel actions, Sparrow would be asked to explain the issue central to the whole affair, namely why he equated genius with homosexuality, an embarrassment that All Souls must on no account be made to suffer.

To avoid having a jury the action must be so choked up with documents that the Master-in-Chambers would think no jury could ever cope with the mountain of evidence. As a writer, I thought book reviews should be impartial and not, as is often the custom, by the author's friends or lovers or from the same publisher, so I used several pen-names. The Fellows of All Souls therefore took into court books written by me under five different pseudonyms and all the letters and other documents connected with the books. I was delighted when those thousands of pages of evidence prevented me, as they were ment to prevent me, from having a trial by jury. If the plaintiff in an action fails to take out the all-important Summons for Directions within the given time limit, then the defendant can apply to the court for an Order dismissing the action brought against him and seek damages. But the court can also treat such an application to strike out as an application for the Summons for Directions. I chose the latter and won the Summons for Directions in all the gagging writs brought against me by Fellows of All Souls since I believed it corrupt and immoral for a wealthy college such as All Souls to abuse the legal system.

Many hearings therefore followed before many judges and masters, some lasting hours, some days, some weeks, and I 'acted in person' in all of them, for I could say things in court which no barrister would dare to say.

During this process, Mr Justice Caulfield rightly linked it all back to my 1963 action when my Cambridge lawyer had produced taped telephone calls about Guy Burgess and me in the war, and, to bring it all up-to-date, the last hearing in 1992 also dealt with numerous tape-recordings and letters to do with Guy Burgess, John Sparrow, and still living Fellows of All Souls and Cabinet Ministers.

The 1971 trial before Mr Justice Swanwick, heard on my Order, was sufficiently important for a judge from the International Court to sit-in on it for part of the three weeks, mostly during my cross-examination of witnesses. Sparrow himself did not appear but a retired Director of Education at Oxford spent days in the witness box, and I only released him so that he could go to Buckingham Palace to be decorated. The Director of Education was unable to examine the documentary evidence he had brought into court, because he could not say which of the stories in my books had originated with Warden Sparrow of All Souls, whether it was the one about Dame Ethel Smyth struggling into her birdcage corsets, or the one about Lady Winefride Elwes hoicking her son out of the monastery, or any of the others.

The Fellows I mentioned in my documents and in court certainly did not agree with Sparrow's equating genius and homosexuality nor had they gone to his Warden's Lodge to be buggered or whipped, nor by and large, did they get into fights like the celebrated one Sparrow had with James Pope-Hennessy later murdered by 'rough trade.' As we were in the Supreme Court, I wanted the judges, lawyers and others present to hear about a story by Mary Huxtable on the murder of Miss Emma Keyse, who had been brought into Queen Victoria's court as a Lady-in-waiting by Lady Jane Churchill, a matter on which the authority was Peter Churchill. The Director of Education assured Mr Justice Swanwick that the story's author, Mary Huxtable, might be a distinguished lawyer. But I told the judge that everybody could see for themselves whether that was so or not because Mrs Huxtable happened to be in court. The judge said he would be pleased to see Mary Huxtable so, dropping a suitable curtesy, I said 'I am Mary Huxtable.' Everyone laughed, including Mr Justice Swanwick who called an adjournment. Once again, I had found out John Sparrow and his minions.

I much regretted not examining John Sparrow on *Letters from Iceland* but my own Icelandic book before the court mentioned Auden and MacNeice and how, while there I met up with their friends from 1936. My companion on many journeys through the interior of Iceland was Ab van Duuren, a young Dutch composer who went 'to Radio House to broadcast a recital of modern Dutch piano music, and to record the music he had finished in my room at Egilsstathir - an Icelandic Ballade.' Ab had been a student with Anner Bylsma, a cellist with whom some of my friends had studied, for Ab

and Anner had both become professors since we went to Iceland in 1958.

In 1986, Oxford University put on a Vivaldi Celebration and invited Anner Bylsma to the historic Holywell Music Room with Peter Skuce accompanying him on the harpsichord. Peter had often used the harpsichord in my studio, and so Anner Bylsma's master classes and rehearsals took place at my home. As 'Charles Sheffield', I phoned John Sparrow and told him about the concert. He chuckled and said he had heard that a recent concert at the Holywell had produced an audience of one, which the Music Room manager later confirmed. But because 'Anner' sounds like 'Anna', Sparrow thought Anner Bylsma was a woman and Sparrow would have known better had he bothered to read the posters everywhere in Oxford stating, 'ANNER BYLSMA, CELLO, The versatile Dutch maestro who took the musical world by storm with the sensational first recordings on baroque cello of Bach's Suites. Tonight he plays the third and fourth Suites and continues our celebration of Vivaldi music with performances of four Op.14 Sonatas.'

I went to Oxford early with Peter Skuce for the afternoon rehearsal where a queue of people already waited for returned tickets. Many students and dons knew of my years-long dispute with Sparrow and we went in a party to try and see the former warden and make a gesture of burying the hatchet. But no, the wound had not healed. Too many members of the Bar had followed Lord Justice Sachs's condemnation of Sparrow bringing the subject of anal intercourse into every conversation, and when Sparrow turned on the students and Helen Gardener, I started up again when no injunction was granted to stop me attacking Warden Sparrow's use of language and scissors on long hair. By the 1986 Vivaldi Celebration, Sir Patrick Neill had become Vice Chancellor of Oxford, and like Chancellor Macmillan, never knew what the outrageous Sparrow would do in his bitterness at being sent into exile in a flat at Iffley. The *Daily Telegraph* wrote, 'Sparrow found his last years hard to bear.'

Other people also found Sparrow's last years hard to bear. He had resorted to extraordinary gimmicks in his desperate attempt to become a cult figure in the American tradition of Sylvia Plath and Jane Bowles or of the English Virginia Woolf and Vita Sackville-West. But the women won, including the lesbians, and Sparrow did not like conceding defeat over his claims equating genius with male homosexuality. Sylvia Plath's poetry will always keep its appeal whereas Sparrow's *Words on the Air* about the glories of hanging and public school whipping have already become words wasting their sadism on the desert air. Nor did Sparrow make it easier for the aged Macmillan to bear the last years of loneliness down in Sussex. Sparrow's love of Forrest Reid's writing about young boys, was shared by Mac's former PPS, Knox Cunningham, and unfortunately it was my clash with Cunningham over

a Protestant museum for Ian Paisley's followers that got caught up with the row at Oxford.

Sam Campbell astonished me when he came to supper at my flat in Halifax, Nova Scotia, by asserting that he had discovered, nearby, the **Clydevalley**, one of the last ironclads, which had been used by Sir Edward Carson's Volunteer Force in 1914 to smuggle 35,000 rifles and three million rounds of ammunition from Germany to Ulster for the fight against Home Rule.

What a sad sight the **Clydevalley** made in 1966 as she awaited the knacker's yard down at Sydney, just south of Halifax. How different from the proud **Ironclads Entering The Solent**, the Victorian painting by T C Moore which had hung for years in the Captains' Room at Lloyds and which I sold in 1978 at Sotheby's. As soon as Knox Cunningham heard about the fate of the **Clydevalley** he conceived the notion of having her made seaworthy before bringing her across the Atlantic back to Ulster where she could be permanently moored as a floating Loyalist museum. To raise money for this ambitious project he had no difficulty in rousing the patriotic emotions of the Paisleyites who were soon wearing little blue badges bearing the words 'Save the Clydevalley' alongside the more familiar 'Jesus Saves.' After numerous misadventures at sea, the creaking old ironclad reached Larne with Ian Paisley and his top brass on board.

But Knox Cunningham's and Ian Paisley's elation did not last long for in August 1974 the **Clydevalley** went to sea again this time to be towed across the Irish Sea to a breaker's yard at Lancaster. The floating Loyalist museum had been a disaster from beginning to end and became a topic of controversy between Ian Paisley and John McKeague who had broken with Paisley's church after McKeague's boyfriend went to prison. Paisley had succeeded in ousting Prime Minister O'Neill and himself became the MP for Bannside so that McKeague could taunt Paisley in *Loyalist News*, 'If Mr Paisley upholds his promise to the people of Bannside as he has upheld his promises regarding the **Clydevalley**, we will have another O'Neill on our hands.'

Large sums of money had been raised at the rallies of the Ulster Protestant Volunteers to bring the ship from Nova Scotia, but six days out of Sydney the **Clydevalley** developed engine trouble and had to limp back to Canada and on the next attempt to cross the Atlantic she began to list so that large debts mounted up on both sides of the Atlantic. Although the rich Sir Knox Cunningham's enthusiasm inspired the Loyalist museum idea, it was the poor Sam Campbell who had approached me about it in Nova Scotia and who later had to face the enormous debts. I advised against the scheme from the start and warned my bank in Halifax not to advance a loan on Cunningham's completely hare-brained scheme. Sir Knox remembered another boat with

Captain Campbell who engaged his 16 daughters as members of the crew, and on seeing him people would sing 'The Campbells are coming by Twos by Twos.' But in the battle of words that followed the Clydevalley fiasco, Cunningham put around the not-new rumour that two of the Campbell sisters, Mary and Catherine, had jointly gone to bed with a Jewish money-lender who begat a daughter, my mother, by Mary.

My mother could leave the civil war now raging in Belfast and come to her family in England, but not so poor Sam Campbell who became extremely bitter at his desertion by the Loyalist museum enthusiasts who he thought had conned him. He died a young man.

The Society of Authors

The documents before Mr Justice Jupp showed that some married clergy disapproved of John Betjeman's and Father Gill's life-style, those two friends who wanted to save Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Street, London. As T S Eliot was their High Church champion, I simply relied for my facts on Faber publications which nevertheless closely guarded Eliot from over-inquisitive eyes, Faber of course publishing my own views on the same matters. Peter Anson's **Bishops at Large** stated of Holy Trinity, 'Its consecration in 1890 coincided more or less with the publication of Oscar Wilde's **The Picture of Dorian Gray** on June 20 that same year; and it was not long before both the church and the novel were alike being extolled as unique works of art or denounced as dangerous to faith and morals. Mr Mathew performed several marriages in this fin-de-siècle Chelsea church, but their validity was subsequently contested in the House of Commons, because he had never been formally licensed as a curate.'

Frank Shelley-Mills, however, had been properly ordained in Anglican Holy Orders and later when Mr Mathew became head of the Old English Catholic Church he made Frank a fellow archbishop. On 7 January 1911, Archbishop Mathew consecrated four bishops, including William Scott-Hall as Bishop of Winchester even though his cathedral was merely a tiny schismatic church in Oxford much admired by young gay undergraduates. Eliot's biographer, Peter Ackroyd, calls Scott-Hall 'a rather eccentric figure' who in 1933 ran a boarding house near Gloucester Road tube station in London. After leaving his wife Vivien, Eliot chose to live with Bishop Scott-Hall. One evening, Eric Cheetham, the local vicar of St Stephen's, came to dinner and so impressed was the poet by this weird priest that he moved into the vicarage and stayed for seven years. Indeed, so greatly did Eliot like life at St Stephen's that he became churchwarden from 1934 to 1959 generally running the church's financial affairs.

Eliot wrote Father Eric's obituary, saying 'Eric Cheetham was very loveable and also, at times, extremely irritating; and one loved him the more for the irritation he caused.' Mrs Eliot did not like her husband's absence and wrote an advertisement for the personal columns of **The Times**, 'Will T S Eliot please return to his home 68 Clarence Gate Gardens which he abandoned Sept 17th 1932. Keys with W.L.J.'

Father Cheetham, not noted for masculinity, devoted nearly as much time to dress-making as to wearing lace in his church. By 1961 so many

religious bodies were claiming to be Catholic and Apostolic, often through Mathew's succession, that Charles Monteith at Fabers asked Peter Anson to write their history in **Bishops At Large**. In the following year, 1962, Monteith read my own description of Archbishop Shelley-Mills who was certainly more at large than any of his fellow prelates, and Fabers published it in **The Protege**.

Also in 1962, Louis MacNeice thought the BBC should dramatise my story which Fabers published, **Man In A Pub**, and we had to ask T S Eliot about one of the big rows at St Stephen's Vicarage while the poet was living with Eric Cheetham. The priest's favourite young man at that moment was a camp actor for whom Father Eric made a waistcoat out of a chasuble. If Eliot disliked both the actor and his waistcoat in 1934, the Catholic landlady who ran the Hanley pub in 1951 where the actor lodged with Patrick McClellan and others of the **Cinderella** cast who are still alive, liked them even less, as I wrote in my story, which the BBC broadcast with the waistcoat episode deleted because Eliot thought the actor might make libel trouble.

As far back as 1925 Eliot had forbidden any official biography of himself. Peter Ackroyd says of this, 'he decided that he did not want one - has suggested to many people that such a biography would necessarily be of a scandalous nature.' From my knowledge of the flamboyant Father Cheetham and these other two High Churchmen, Tom Driberg and W H Auden, and their pursuit of semen, I cannot imagine that sex inspired Eliot's obsession with guilt and the need for atonement and expiation.

Eliot did, however, write, **After Strange Gods: A Primer of Modern Heresy**, but he later disavowed it and would not permit it to be reprinted. After his baptism into the Anglican communion in 1927, Eliot walked with his two godparents amid the ancient oaks of the Wychwood estate which gave Peter Churchill his title, the Viscount Churchill of Wychwood. Eliot later set **The Family Reunion** in a house called Wishwood after Wychwood's turbulent last chatelaine, Verena Churchill, died on Christmas Day 1938, leaving her lesbian lover / spiritual director / daughter-in-law, wandering around London in a pathetic state until she killed herself. During Peter Churchill's last weekend with the Balcombes in Rottingdean, he was asked if he would like his ashes sprinkled under the tree in the garden where he and the Indian students meditated. But no, Peter insisted adamantly that the urn with his ashes must go to the family chapel at Wychwood, and he recited Eliot's words from **The Family Reunion**, 'So the knot be unknotted/ The cross be uncrossed/ The crooked be made straight/ And the curse be ended.'

While sitting in the Rottingdean garden during 1972, Peter heard the BBC news of his cousin King Edward VIII's death. After a few solemn moments a flood of lively memories followed, especially of Queen Mary's

Initial interest in the spiritist goings-on which changed to horror as packets of sign-writing appeared at Buckingham Palace from Peter's 'wife' who controlled his mother who happened to be the wife of the Lord Chamberlain. King Edward VIII had been temporal head of the Church of England but not of those bishops at large of the Old English Catholic Church. Ironically, after a civil wedding to Mrs Simpson he had to rely on the good offices of the Old English Catholic Church for the performance of a religious ceremony on 3 June 1937 in Touraine. On Christmas Eve 1950, however, Jimmy Donahue led his lover, the Duchess of Windsor, and the former temporal head of the Anglican Church, ex-King Edward VIII, into Midnight Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral in New York.

After his confirmation in the Anglican Bishop of Oxford's private chapel T S Eliot chose to live in the boarding house run by the Old English Catholic Bishop Scott-Hall and afterwards in the dress-making home of the weird Father Cheetham. This might suggest that Eliot sympathised with his clergy friends who felt unsure about the validity of their Anglican ordination and who, to allay their doubts, went for re-ordination to prelates of the Old English Catholic Church such as Mathew or Shelley-Mills.

While staying with the Anglican Bishop George Bell at Chichester Palace in 1934 Eliot was asked to write a play for the Canterbury Festival and so created the dramatic masterpiece **Murder In The Cathedral**. Eliot admired both Bishop Bell's poetry and his principles which led to the bishop's stand against the RAF's indiscriminate bombing of German cities. And Eliot, struggling with the question of guilt, naturally felt outraged when his friend George Bell was deliberately prevented from becoming Archbishop of Canterbury by the malice of Brendan Bracken, in revenge for Bell's opposition to the bombing. Eliot felt it all the more keenly because of Bracken's dubious origins and even more dubious links with the Roman Catholic Playboy Poet, Evan Tredegar, whose protege Bracken had become in 1922. But then, Eliot understood a young man's indiscretions, for he had dabbled himself in anti-Semitism and Ouspensky's seances, ultimately shedding both for the churchwardenship of St Stephen's.

For over forty years Eliot worshipped in this solid church of 1866, with un-Victorian green and gold walls reminiscent of the chasuble-waistcoat. The statue of the patron St Stephen carries the stones of his martyrdom in his belt while the sanctuary's red lamps denote the reserved sacrament. When the war came Father Cheetham decamped with his sewing-machine to safe quarters under the Royal Albert Hall, and Eliot to the country. Eliot's obituary of Cheetham in the parish magazine also noted, 'There was more than one occasion on which my fellow Warden and I, having gone by appointment to discuss some problem with him, were obliged finally to leave in a state of

exhaustion and frustration, because Father Cheetham had done all the talking and had not given us the opportunity to say what we had come to say or to ask the questions to which we needed answers.'

Although Eliot continued as churchwarden after the war, he could no longer stand life at St Stephen's Vicarage and moved into a flat with John Hayward in Carlyle Mansions where Eliot had a back bedroom with an ebony crucifix above his bed and one bare electric light bulb to lighten this monastic cell. Such asceticism contrasted startlingly with the life style of his fellow-American on the Faber board, Morley Kennerley, who revelled in his beautiful home, resplendent office and prestigious cars. Eliot went to his Faber office by bus doing *The Times* crossword, and suffered pangs of guilt if obliged to take a taxi.

Although a schoolfriend of the founder, Sir Geoffrey Faber, the author Maurice Collis only came face to face with T S Eliot for the first time on 1 January 1957 when he was standing in the publisher's Russell Square hallway and, 'I saw him descending the stairs. He was dressed in dark clothes, an overcoat, a soft hat. His face was exceedingly lined and weary. He passed by and out through the hall door, drooping with gloom and as it were dazed with despair.' I cannot imagine Eliot going to or from Fabers without him warmly greeting Miss Swan, the elderly receptionist to whom Eliot always sent a holiday postcard. But the timing of Collis's remarks is significant for on 10 January 1957 Eliot walked out of the flat he had shared for eleven years with John Hayward.

Much has been written about Eliot's life with the cripple confined to a wheelchair, John Hayward, who did editorial work on Eliot's writing since the poet highly regarded Hayward's ability as a critic. Anthony Powell described Hayward as 'at once nervous and dominating' who 'could at times approach the positively tyrannical.' Why, then, did Eliot move from the browbeating gossip Father Cheetham's vicarage to the 'caustic and gossipy creature given to telling salacious stories,' as Peter Ackroyd remarked of Hayward?

After Eliot's death in 1965, Christopher Sykes wrote in *The Book Collector* a memoir of Eliot which I sent to Adeline de la Feld and others in her family who had known both Eliot and Sykes, the latter being born in the same year as Adeline's nephew, Michael Rosse, and also going to Oxford with him. Tom Driberg wrote of that period, 'I also recorded the literary progress of Nancy Mitford, John Betjeman and Evelyn Waugh - and wrote of Christopher Sykes, Waugh's biographer of nearly half-a-century later, that he had "a taste for massive splendour and two ambitions: (1) to be elected Pope, and (2) to conduct a great orchestra in Wagner".'

Christopher Sykes had his own splendid home in Yorkshire, in which county Adeline de la Feld spent much time during her visits home to Denby

Grange as well as looking after the Parsons children at Womersley Park when their mother married her second husband, Lord de Vesci, and went to his estates elsewhere. Since Christopher Sykes married Camilla Russell, daughter of the Pasha of Cairo, he could not become a pope, but he was a fellow diplomat of Hugh Montgomery and enjoyed many Wagnerian evenings with Peter Montgomery when they both worked at the BBC, although when Christopher Sykes turned up at my flat he brought his current girlfriend rather than the beautiful Camilla. Sykes knew all the famous and infamous gays but was a ladies' man himself and more than anybody else I knew, shared with T S Eliot the care of the wheelchair-bound John Hayward.

Jimmy Wright, another but non-resident St Dunstaner, had met Charles Monteith and other Faber directors at my home or in restaurants between Jimmy's studio and Fabers, for although wartime service in the RAF had left Jimmy severely burnt and blinded he nevertheless returned to film-making and from his Shepperton home arranged for Peter Harris and me to go by ambulance to the Royal Festival Hall where Christopher Sykes quickly fell to looking after Peter's long wheelchair. For many years Christopher delayed going to his country home in Dorset at weekends so that he and T S Eliot could spend Saturday afternoons taking John Hayward on excursions, often to the gardens of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. Christopher wrote of them watching a football match between Chelsea Municipal Maintenance Staff and Marylebone Dustmen, 'The forlorn scene fascinated Eliot and in spite of the cold and the drizzle he stayed and watched for several minutes.'

The 'positively tyrannical' John Hayward certainly disapproved of being kept in the rain watching dustmen play football. He liked to refer to Eliot as his 'lodger' though felt proud enough when the poet wheeled him to literary receptions where the shy Eliot stood behind the chair and obediently recited his poetry or quoted verbatim long passages from Sherlock Holmes stories. An illustration in Maurice Collis's autobiography shows Hayward 'in bath chair' surrounded by kneeling 'Guests at a party given by H.R.H. the Princess Zeid at the Iraq Embassy.'

The same book tells how in 1955, before Fabers published Collis's book on Burma, Collis 'talked over debatable points with those best qualified to advise me, such as Sir Gilbert Laithwaite.' Hugh Montgomery displeased his cousin Bernard, the field marshal, when he wrote to *The Times*. But Gilbert did not like it later when I used his own letters in the High Court to defend the Pope against Protestant extremists who had got hold of some old press cuttings.

I had introduced Gilbert to John Davenport who was writing a biography of Norman Douglas but when John came to Norman's relationships with pre-pubescent boys, the outraged Gilbert ensured that Davenport got no

more money so that the book was never finished. No wonder Gilbert wrote to me that he would not be able to sleep in his bed at night if he thought I would expose his string-pullings to **Private Eye**, that he never missed reading to see which of his business associates were in trouble over sex or money. On emerging from Broadcasting House one day Gilbert ran into Anthony Blunt who asked the subject of Gilbert's talk, 'India and the Old Man' replied Gilbert meaning Gandhi. Blunt flushed with anger at the immaculate figure of Sir Gilbert, complete with red carnation, putting on such airs about the 'Old Man' who had gone to prison in the fight for his country's independence from the British Raj of which Gilbert was a leading figure. From that day the description of Gilbert as an 'Arch Snob' entered the letters others sent to **Private Eye** which led to the unmasking of that other arch snob, Blunt, as a Russian spy.

Gilbert was outraged again in 1957 when T S Eliot left John Hayward alone in the flat they had shared when Eliot went off and married his secretary, Valerie Fletcher, not at his own St Stephen's Church, but at another in Kensington. Many saw this as cruel, but Eliot might have left Hayward in any case, wedding or no wedding. It is easy to overlook the fact that although muscular dystrophy bound Hayward to his wheelchair, this clever man-of-letters was entirely 'positively tyrannical' as Anthony Powell described him, and I believe that Eliot was much too afraid of John to tell him of the forthcoming marriage until the taxi was at the door to take him to the unaccustomed church.

But Eliot's secret plans surprised more than John Hayward and Father Cheetham. Eliot and his first wife Vivien had worked hard to get the **Criterion** magazine going and the poet knew perfectly well that snobbish literati such as Evan Tredegar not only held 'modern' poetry itself in contempt but also the people who reproduced it, such as those behind **Criterion**. In his turn, Eliot regarded them as 'shits,' as he told Conrad Aiken, although Eliot's condemnation of Hamlet led Edmund Gosse to call him a 'conceited literary humbug.' How jubilant the 'shits' became when the Eliots split up and Vivien put parcels of that substance through Fabers' letter-box.

The most publicised of Eliot's critics, Lord Alfred Douglas, spoke at the Royal Society of Literature in 1943 of **The Principles of Poetry**, and with Evan Tredegar as chairman, Bosie gave a final blast, 'It is a frightful reflection on the miserable and abject state to which criticism has sunk in England that this pitiable stuff has for years been accepted without protest as poetry. Mr Eliot is the supreme example of contempt of form. Far less blatant is the case of the late Mr Yeats . . . Unlike Mr Eliot he did write poetry, sometimes fine poetry in correct form; but he also very often wrote incorrect lines which cannot be made to scan.'

Neither Bosie Douglas nor Evan Tredegar could conceive that entirely different principles had evolved in poetry as they had in every other art, a fact observed early in her career by Adeline de la Feld. Poetry is not made by principles but the spirit of the poet and that is why Eliot's verse has survived while Douglas's and Tredegar's has not. They wallowed in faded images, Eliot's were striking, 'Hell is oneself; / Hell is alone, the other figures in it / Merely projections. There is nothing to escape from / And nothing to escape to. One is always alone.'

When he wrote **The Waste Land**, April really was the cruellest month in spite of the sonneteers scanning on and on that month. Anyway, I felt justifiably excited to have so many of my early poems published by Fabers. Nevertheless, during the Second World War when Brighton's cliff-top Roedean School had been transformed into the torpedo base **HMS Vernon**, I had gladly joined Evan Tredegar as he led a dozen young sailors down the hill and through the woods to Ovingdean Church. I was drunk with youthful happiness, a state heightened no doubt by the drugs with which Evan had laced the black mass communion wine. From among that naval crowd enjoying Evan's wartime bounty, only the Admiralty boffin Jack Wellman became a priest. The books he wrote on his priestly vocation concern occultism while his 33 years as a Hampstead vicar might also be described by my 1944 poem to Evan, 'In the world yet not of the world.'

By marrying T S Eliot, young Valerie Fletcher possibly gave him a feeling of having at last escaped from his 'Hell is alone' which the poet's treatment of John Hayward gave those whose work Eliot had rejected for **Criterion** the satisfaction of saying 'we told you so' about Eliot being a bounder. One voice from the past, however, who adored Eliot to the end was Nancy Cunard.

In her 1919 diary Vivien Eliot recorded a dinner party with Nancy Cunard, Osbert Sitwell and Duncan Grant, 'very drunken and rowdy but not fun.' In 1921 Ezra Pound wrote to Nancy in Paris, 'Lovely Nancy, I will take the poem to the Dial this evening . . . You haven't asked for criticism only I don't know who else is to give it to you, nobody in England knows anything, except Eliot, and he is too weary and too polite to distribute it.' This shows the polite but weary Mr Eliot of Lloyds Bank and Nancy's early efforts to publish and distribute her own poetry. In 1919 Leonard and Virginia Woolf set up the small publishing venture called the Hogarth Press and in 1925 published Nancy's **Parallax**. In April 1928 in the village of Réanville Nancy set up the Hours Press and published some of the subsequently great names of English literature before they went to Eliot when he became a director of the new firm Faber and Faber.

Peter Churchill wrote in **All My Sins Remembered**, 'In the thirties,

in the days of the original *surréalisme* of Louis Aragon and André Breton, a farmhouse in a village called Réanville not far from Vernon had been bought by the beautiful, brilliant and astonishing Nancy Cunard. I had stayed there with Nancy and I had often walked over the hills to the nearest railway station, Vernon. Coming down the long hill into Vernon, and usually involved in some emotional discussion on Marxism, art or the contemporary political scene, my eye had caught the two tall poplar trees standing alone in the distance. They had been a feature of the landscape that had seemed to possess a strange significance, and I had remembered them. Now, years later, I was standing at the spot where they grew, in Joan's garden. Joan had an income left in trust from her father and she had made the house on the outskirts of Vernon as English as possible. To me, it was an England amusingly idealized that Joan, born in Northern Ireland and having lived and been educated in France, had created.'

Joan Black of Belfast became Peter's wife and in the later 1940s lived in the old Normandy farmhouse which she had adapted as an 'English dream' near Nancy's old house which in the 1930s she had converted into the Hours Press as well as an 'African dream' for her black lover and business partner, Henry Crowder. It might be thought that Nancy would have been flattered by Peter's description of their life together in France. But no, he had written in the same book, 'Several summers and winters were spent between London and Paris, sharing in London a funny little four-roomed house in Chelsea with my friend Christopher Wood, one of the best of the young English painters, in fact, except for Francis Rose, the only good one of that particular date.'

By the time Peter's book eventually appeared in 1964 after much libel vetting, Cecil Beaton had made Christopher Wood's family home, Reddish House, famous with his parties held there. That photographer of the Right did share one point of view with the Communist, Nancy Cunard. They both wished it had been Francis Rose who threw himself under a train at Salisbury Station and not Christopher Wood. Nancy had good reason for hating Rose.

When Nancy Cunard returned to France after the war ended in 1945, she found her house at Réanville stripped of her famous collection of African and other primitive sculptures together with paintings and Persian carpets. She wrote, 'In a dream I wandered through the shell of my home . . . What was this in the bath torn away from its fittings? The two stone heads from Easter Island that Alvaro Guevara had given me years before . . . And this, nailed firmly to a window in lieu of glass? The once green vellum covers of Rodker's large and beautiful edition of Ezra Pound's *Cantos* . . . Here, flung face down and horribly creased, was my lovely blue landscape by Tanguy . . . it was shot full of bullet holes, ten small, one large. And I saw what looked like a bayonet thrust through part of the portrait Eugene MacCown had done of me in Paris in 1923.'

German soldiers had been billeted in Nancy's farmhouse during the war but if they had vandalised many works of art with their bayonets, she was aware 'most of the damage, and the hatred and contempt that lay behind it, had come from local people, natives of her adopted country, among whom she had lived, she thought, as a friend, for so long,' as Anne Chisholm wrote in her biography of Nancy. But the loss which hurt more was the disappearance of her entire correspondence with Nancy's authors and friends at the Hours Press such as Richard Aldington, Ezra Pound, Evan Tredegar, Aldous Huxley, Michael Arlen, T S Eliot, Wyndham Lewis, Robert Graves, Ronald Firbank, Raymond Mortimer, John Strachey, Iris Tree and many others.

Nancy's pre-war life-style had outraged the villagers and clergy. If she and her black lover had worked quietly producing books at their Hours Press they might have been overlooked, but the orgies and even the titles of their books, such as Beckett's 1930 *Whoroscope*, offended the French villagers. They found the 'astonishing fat' Wyn Henderson disgusting, whether she stood to pee on the way home from the village bar or lay down in the fields with the latest young lover. In January 1938 Beckett was nearly killed when a beggar pulled out a knife which just missed his heart. Nancy attracted many lovers of many races, but she preferred those of African origin and gave her best book the simple title *Negro*.

At Réanville the village people threw copies of *Negro* into the well at Nancy's house along with dead sheep and excrement to express their dislike of her and she eventually sold the farmhouse and stayed in Paris. Of all the 1930s visitors at Réanville only Peter Churchill returned to live there, and he wrote of Joan Black's own farmhouse there, 'Everything was not well, however, in this Elysium, I soon discovered that. The place called La Cerisaie, The Cherry Orchard, seemed almost to be inviting the kind of soul trouble which Joan had endured while living there...I was at La Cerisaie and it was clear that no one wanted Joan and me to be together.'

Nancy knew who had stolen her dresses and silver cutlery during the war because someone in the village told her. But which French villager would want to steal Nancy's letters? Nobody spoke English there let alone read it, and nobody would have any idea of the letters' value. The finger pointed at Joan Black, the 'Black Witch from Belfast.' Nancy at the age of 51 met the 24 year old William le Page Finley and although he was 'basically homosexual' they started an affair. He wrote, 'Then she told me about the destruction of her house in Normandy by the Germans, that she intended to sell it and would I like to come with her to see it. We set off for Vernon..One evening at Joan Black's, being rather tipsy, I happened to discover a bottle of gin and told Malcolm (Lowry) and he suggested we take it and go to an empty bedroom and enjoy ourselves. We were finally discovered by Nancy, followed by the

other guests, and a disagreeable scene followed.'

The following day Finley and the novelist Malcolm Lowry got a bottle of cognac and he wrote 'we stripped and went to bed with the cognac. By noon Nancy and Malcolm's wife Margorie were at the door and we refused to open. I said "Can't you understand when two men want to be alone together?" Joan Black never forgave me for this incident and I was barred from the house.' Joan was too closely involved with Nancy Cunard and her lovers and she too left Normandy to return to her native Ulster and married Peter Churchill there, but she died on the eve of their buying a house at Rottingdean and because her trust fund reverted to her Belfast relations, Peter stayed with the Balcombes when he went to Rottingdean.

Nancy began her rebellious life as she meant to continue it, horrifying London society and French village alike. Among the mutual friends from the First World War with whom T S Eliot and Nancy kept up was Raymond Mortimer, the *Sunday Times* critic. Soon the international press would be reporting Nancy's latest stay in London. At Oxford in the 1920s Evelyn Waugh observed about Michael Rosse, 'I think his manners are not good.' In 1991 Waugh's son Auberon quoted his father saying, "Why do you expect me to talk to this boring pig?" he would suddenly shout at his hostess about some fellow guest. "He is common, he is ignorant and he is stupid, and he thinks Picasso is an important painter."

If Evelyn Waugh did not care much for the Earl of Rosse he kept up with Rosse's sister Bridget and in his subsequently published diary duly recorded her battle with a London policeman. But it was that well-known London policeman-hater, Nancy Cunard, who had a surprise over the press reports of the drunken Bridget's language when chased by a police car on the eve of her step-nephew's marriage to Princess Margaret in 1960. Nancy arrived in London on 20 April that same year and telephoned me having seen a review of my first Faber book. But Nancy was back on her old haunts wanting sex with any man.

T S Eliot was aghast at the stories of Nancy carrying explosives around with her, for although he and Morley Kennerley would celebrate the Fourth of July by schoolboy pranks such as putting firecrackers into Geoffrey Faber's coal-scuttle, the two Americans knew Nancy to be playing with real fire. It was reported that she had escaped, but only just, from a taxi after a blast from a flame-thrower she had kept from the days when she and Peter Churchill had been in the Spanish Civil War. Another version of the same story told that she used the flame-thrower on a policeman who had tried to arrest her. But despite the excess of drink and the insatiable craving for sex, Nancy's memory would come back at times between incoherent bouts about the police being Fascist spies in the pay of Washington.

She wanted to know if I had seen Wyn Henderson in possession of letters from Hours Press authors, the inference being that Wyn had no right to any such letters. But I thought Wyn did have a right to remove letters from the Réanville farmhouse because Wyn had been the Hours Press person responsible for many of its books, and authors naturally wrote, especially if they were Wyn's lovers, business/personal letters to her, and often she had to deal with these things entirely on her own during Nancy's long absences.

Nancy's behaviour, by no means confined to friends and acquaintances in private, built up to an inevitable climax when, after a big fight with her arch-enemy, the police, she was arrested on charges of soliciting and disorderly behaviour in the King's Road. When the magistrate saw her struggling in court and her shoes came sailing through the air at him, he had Nancy sent to Holloway Prison on remand for medical reports. The doctors saw that she was completely incapable of looking after herself and she was taken from prison to St Clements Hospital in the East End while certification was taking place. This was not easy because none of her relations wanted to be involved. Victor Cunard, a cousin Nancy knew well from the years he had spent in Paris working for *The Times*, was in London but he refused to sign the certificate. Nancy had got into his club and groped every man in sight. But Victor held out. He was a sick man himself and, like many, very fond of Nancy. In the end, Roger Senhouse signed the dreaded certificate on behalf of his old friend, Victor Cunard.

Raymond Mortimer and I alerted Nancy's friends so that she would not be too long alone. But most people found the conditions at St Clements hard going. After my first visit I gave up. Nancy was back in the East End not far from the Tredegar estate. Evan was, she screamed, a Fascist reactionary like her mother and Peter Churchill who she claimed had stolen Evan from her just as William Finley had taken Malcolm Lowry to bed under Nancy's and Mrs Lowry's noses. Nancy lay in her St Clements Hospital bed glaring at the giggling idiots around her who wanted their palms read because they thought Nancy was a fortune-teller since even in a madhouse she still wore a bandeau across her forehead. Nancy's own wild look took on the expression of hatred she generally reserved for confrontation with policemen.

Peter Churchill's old friend, Louis Aragon, was at this time editor of the Communist newspaper *Les Lettres Françaises*, and in the 24 July 1960 edition he wrote on the front page, 'Some strange news has come to us from London, and a poem. Nancy Cunard is known in France. She has lived here for most of her life, and later on it will not be possible to write the intellectual history of this century without discussing her...Nancy Cunard has been shut up and "certified insane" which, strangely enough in the country of Habeas Corpus, may turn out to be equivalent to a life sentence. If one goes by her

letter everything fits into the overall pattern of a generous life, nothing adds up to mental breakdown. Let it be known in England that Nancy Cunard is not, as she believes, "as alone in the world as a newborn baby" but that in France, in Spain, in Italy...in all the black world, in America, in Africa, there are men and women who have not forgotten her, and who are waiting to hear the justification for such arbitrary procedures.'

Gilbert Laithwaite and his Foreign Office colleagues whom Nancy for long accused of stopping her from taking her black lover Henry Crowder to see his cultural origins in Africa, became uneasy at the international reaction to Nancy's fate. However, all was not lost, and nature being the wonderful thing it is, in less than six months without the alcohol which drove her to propositioning strangers for sex, Nancy was back in France.

On 7 January 1965 Nancy heard on the radio that her old friend T S Eliot had died and she at once wrote a long prose poem about their early years. She recalled the 'lovely face' of the Prince of Wales as she danced with him in a Poiret dress that had 'gold with cascading white tulle on the hips' and Eliot in a dinner jacket. Even the Communist Nancy had to recall the great days in her mother's ballroom. Nancy amazed Peter Churchill and me by sending her prose-poem to John Hayward since Nancy had at times vociferously condemned Eliot's 'desertion' of Hayward in such a sudden manner.

In 1971 the facsimile edition of *The Waste Land* was published and from documentary evidence its *Fire Sermon* can probably be dated to 1921 by which time Eliot and his first wife had been to a dinner party with St John and Mary Hutchinson with Osbert Sitwell, Duncan Grant and Nancy Cunard. Vivien Eliot noted it was 'very drunken and rowdy but not fun.' But Nancy's own writing showed that the Hutchinsons' dinner parties bored her and she persuaded Eliot to miss one and go for a 'tryst' with her at the Eiffel Tower Restaurant where they talked for hours.

Vivien Eliot was no fool and although a sick woman, Eliot acknowledged her as the best judge of his works and in 1921 when they were together in Margate wrote *The Fire Sermon*. He composed it on the seafront, 'On Margate Sands./ I can connect/ Nothing with nothing...' During the First World War they stayed with Bertrand Russell who, being a pacifist, gave them £3000 in engineering debentures, repaid in 1927. But nothing could repay the damage done by Russell's affair with Vivien which some people, including Eliot, blamed for her mental crisis. Russell's memoirs, however, show that he tried to help the Eliots 'until I discovered that their troubles were what they enjoyed.'

Although Vivien flirted with Russell, she disapproved of her husband going on a 'tryst' with Nancy Cunard. The Eliots needed money as he had not yet joined Faber's, and while loans from rich titled people such as Lord Russell

must have spared them worry for a short time, they could only have been galled by dinner parties with Nancy Cunard and the Prince of Wales for the Eliots struggled hard to find financial backers to publish their work, while the amateur Nancy could not only choose her publishers but also critics among influential friends to review her poems. Since Ezra Pound himself was much indebted to Nancy, he certainly had no wish for her to be identified with the spoilt society amateur poetess portrayed in *The Fire Sermon*. So the 'documentary sketches of contemporary characters' that might identify Nancy in *The Waste Land* remained unpublished until 1971 when Eliot and Nancy were both dead.

Adeline de la Feld had started her own literary career before Eliot first came to England in 1911. She embraced Futurism that discarded old things and explored new forms in the visual arts and literature, and she regarded Chekhov as the century's greatest story-teller and T S Eliot as its greatest poet. But she was also a champion of Votes for Women and when she read allegations in the press about Eliot having affairs with men, she grew annoyed. Tom Driberg wrote in *Ruling Passions*, 'One paragraph in particular impressed my old Oxford friend Brian Howard (Some might not regard this as the highest recommendation.)'

Adeline was one. In the *New Statesman* on 8 November 1930, Howard wrote, of *The Waste Land*, 'It became such a plague that the moment the eye encountered, in a newly arrived poem, the words "stone", "dust" or "dry" one reached for the waste-paper bucket.' Adeline did not mind Driberg or Howard fellating sailors provided they did so in private and did not deliberately set out to offend old ladies such as her mother, but Adeline called Howard 'the Rotten One' because of the way he treated her favourite relation, Desmond Parsons, and because he held homosexuality to be a prerequisite of genius. Howard certainly knew that his homosexuality did not produce a work of genius in his own *First Poems* published by Nancy Cunard in 1931 at the Hours Press, though nobody could deny that he was a talented gossip. Louis MacNeice wrote to Auden, 'Poetry is related to the sermon and you have your penchant for preaching, but it is more closely related to conversation, and you, my dear, are a born gossip.'

As the 1970s saw Adeline enter her 90s and depending more and more on me to express her opinions, I challenged the gossips to prove that Eliot's genius derived from homosexual activity, and to give evidence that he had male lovers. Dil de Rohan had written to me in 1965 about the three police officers from Gray's Inn Road who read all my letters and who were interested in Dil calling Dick Crossman such names as 'Dirty Dick' and 'Double Cross.' Wystan Auden had had an affair with Crossman and after returning from New York the poet went to see Crossman, now installed as editor of the *New*

Statesman. As a leading light of the Labour Party, Crossman thought Auden's re-entry into the fold of the Church of England was itself a double cross since Auden, like his fellow-High Churchman and Oxford's Select Preacher Tom Driberg, placed his faith in phallic worship. Furthermore, ex-lover Crossman did not like Auden's recent verse. 'What I want from Auden is good homosexual love poetry, like "lay your sleeping head." Show me any good homosexual poem from the later poetry. That's what I want!' demanded Editor Crossman of his **New Statesman** staff.

What his former colleague, Attorney General Sam Silkin wanted from the High Court was an injunction to stop publication of the Crossman diaries, but the High Court refused, just as Mr Justice Caulfield refused to strike out my affidavit about the earlier High Court actions dating from 1963 and involving Silkin's Labour colleagues who also disapproved of Crossman's double cross over sex. Documents in the case showed that one of Adeline de la Feld's friends who came daily to court raised the subject of Adeline's jewel sale and the proceeds going to the Church Commissioners who did not spend them in the manner she specified. In 1991 the Bishop of Oxford and two other clergy took the Church Commissioners to the High Court over ethical aspects of investing church funds.

Although Peter Churchill and Fawdrey Thomas were dead I had made tape-recordings of them for use as evidence essential to a fair trial. In the 1950s portable tape-recorders were cumbersome as I knew from using BBC machines when I travelled abroad or in the UK collecting programme material. But I learnt the significance of tape-recording in legal affairs from my solicitor and indeed I took into the court his letter explaining why he had tape-recorded me in his office in 1963 as I talked to Guy Burgess's former landlord. If the practice of tape-recording people was good enough for lawyers then it was also good enough for non-lawyers, a fact of which Christopher Sykes became aware. Sitting in his BBC office, under the glaring eyes of his friend Evelyn Waugh photographed after a broadcast, Christopher expressed his growing concern that too many of Nancy Cunard's friends and authors who had not subsequently been published by Eliot when he went to Fabers, were now saying things about the poet's life which Sykes, as a first-hand witness to the events, knew to be lies bred out of malice. So in case those people pushed Eliot into suing them for libel and/or slander we decided to tape-record them.

Court proceedings are similarly tape-recorded but the snag with any tapes used in litigation is financial because getting a typed transcription of the tapes which can be agreed as accurate by both parties in a dispute can be a most expensive item, as was seen in the Rottingdean case. The Brighton solicitor had to go to his London agent and both had to consult counsel before

coming with a secretary to see me and my representatives in North London. After a first draft, there had to be a repeat performance for me to agree the transcription. Fortunately for my argument in the High Court I had a tape of Churchwarden Thomas's allegation about what Prime Minister Harold Wilson was doing in Rottingdean and another tape made by one of Wilson's Cabinet Ministers on Thomas's allegations.

Adeline de la Feld, who had shocked many people over the years, eventually shocked me too with her letter about wanting a sign to dispel her doubts about the High Church which she had spent a lifetime supporting. Her knowledge and love of that church, and its institutions such as the Sacred Mission at Kelham which I also knew, assumed a new importance when others began to raise questions about T S Eliot's 'ultimate sincerity as a man and as a Christian.' I had to look at the basis of such questioning and found interpretations of Eliot's High Church affiliations in Adeline's own. There can hardly be a definitive Eliot biography since he was not a definitive man. Perhaps, like Adeline, he doubted.

Charles Monteith succeeded Eliot as the Faber poetry director and on 7 August 1967 Monteith wrote to me in Canada, 'My dear Robert, It occurred to us here recently - I rather think the idea was originally Rose's - that a really good book on Portugal could be very successful indeed. It's obviously a fascinating country - and more and more people seem to be going there. Is there any chance at all, I wonder, of persuading you to tackle it? After THE AZORES and BRAZIL I've got a feeling that it might be a very congenial one - and I'm certain that a most distinguished book would be the result. I'm certain too, that the excellent relations you've developed with the Portuguese authorities in connection with THE AZORES should help even more with a book on Portugal itself. Do please let me know how this idea strikes you. I look forward very much indeed to hearing from you. With warmest good wishes, Yours ever, Charles.'

The British government used Lonsdale Bryans's bank as a simple but effective method to choke off his secret missions, and in **Blind Victory** he wrote, 'I decided to leave Portugal for Madeira. Prices were mounting, and simultaneously Treasury restrictions were being tightened at home regarding transference of credit from England. Consequently in face of the urgent need for economy (since my activities no longer seemed to meet with home approval), I felt that a migration to Madeira was advisable.'

Donald Darling had also been living in Lisbon but moved to Gibraltar in time to receive Juan Pujol and arrange his journey to London where Pujol became 'Garbo', the war's most notable double agent. In 1962 Lonsdale was delighted by Donald's **Daily Telegraph** review of my Brazil book because Donald revealed a mutual wartime friend. Like some of Donald Darling's

other friends, Lonsdale called him 'Robert Parker,' the name Nancy Mitford gave him in *Love in a Cold Climate*, having met him during the Spanish Civil War when he and Sir Richard Rees worked for the Quakers.

Lonsdale knew Rees as a fellow Etonian who had a short-lived career as a British diplomat in Berlin, but kept up with fellow homosexuals such as Albrecht Bernstorff. It was, however, that other Etonian of unusual habits, Peter Churchill, whom Lonsdale Bryans went to visit in the Civil War. Since Louis MacNeice and Anthony Blunt also went to see Donald Darling in war-ravaged Spain, many reunions took place at my Guilford Street flat during the early 1960s after Donald and I returned from Brazil. Other friendships sprang up from the coincidence of Nancy Mitford's eccentric father having joined Bryans House on going to Radley in 1891. Many of these people took their cue from Louis MacNeice and wrote of who did what in the Spanish Civil War, although the same books are noticeably reticent on who was in whose political alignment or bed during the Second World War, when Lonsdale Bryans and Donald Darling scurried about recruiting double agents in Lisbon. But both of those authors regarded with horror Faber's 1962 vetting of my book *The Protege*.

In an *Observer* interview the present Mrs Eliot said that when she went to work at Fabers in 1949 as T S Eliot's secretary, the atmosphere was 'feudal in the sense that women were useful for typing.' But Alan Pringle, the Faber literary director, who looked after authors during Eliot's lecture tours abroad, did not even use a typist if he judged a manuscript to be in any way libel sensitive. He covered page after foolscap page in his precise handwriting trying to justify the claim at the top of his report, 'Name changes all through.' The Barry School of Evangelism became the Beulah Bible Academy while Mrs Wills became Mrs Curry-Gowan.

I was writing about a South Wales in which Sir Herbert Cory MP and his sister-in-law, Mrs Mabel Wills, had been important religious and moral voices. In 1937 Herbert's daughter Carmen married the son of Lord McGowan, the chairman for many years of Imperial Chemical Industries and similar companies which valued his first-rate scientific skills. Lonsdale Bryans kept up-to-date with Harry McGowan's research programmes in university laboratories in England as well as in the African Explosives and Chemical Industries and other massive plants around the world. Brendan Bracken asked Lord McGowan for his opinion of Lonsdale's theories that 'the world of mankind as we know it' was doomed. For Dennis Parry to have used an Abergavenny pulpit for proclaiming Hitler as the Anti-Christ who would win the war was only a minor irritant, but Churchill's government had sponsored Lonsdale Bryans's mission and they viewed his lengthy book *The Curve of Fate* as a major threat to war morale.

Did Lonsdale Bryans know of the atomic secrets that could bring civilization to an end? And if Lonsdale was so certain of his facts, why was he asking the government to sponsor his secret talks in Switzerland and Portugal? Dennis Parry could be sent to Cardiff Prison, but Lonsdale Bryans had too many influential friends in the government and other high places, so the gentlemanly thing to do was to stop Lonsdale's bank from sending funds to him in Lisbon.

However, like Pastor Fidler in Barry and Princess de Rohan in London, Lonsdale knew how to get around such restrictions. In addition to Lonsdale Bryans and Carl Burckhardt of the International Red Cross, the German Resistance led by Baron von Hassell had another intermediary in the Bishop of Stockholm who thought April 1942 not the cruellest month, for during it T S Eliot went to Sweden on an extensive lecture tour. Eliot's friend, Bishop Bell of Chichester, who so roundly condemned the indiscriminate bombing of German towns, was anxious to get Pastor Niemöller sent to Pastor Alexander in Geneva, and so was the Principal of the sister School of Evangelism in Barry, Pastor Fidler. For years Canon and Mrs Lonsdale Bryans had dominated evangelical life in and beyond South Wales with her evangelical best-sellers. Naturally, the Barry Bible Depot did not stock her worldly-wise nephew's writings such as *The Curve of Fate*, but nevertheless they saw Lonsdale as a potential bulwark against the godless Russians.

So political rather than religious motives had prompted Principal Fidler to use his influence with the authorities and get an urgent permit for me to travel from Belfast to Barry in the D-Day tension of June 1944 for the new term at the Barry School which did not start until September. The fly in Lonsdale's ointment as I saw it was Brendan Bracken's jealousy of the Eton/Oxford network. Evan Tredegar had been obliged to leave school 'under a cloud' and the vastly rich Lady Houston had not hesitated to hoist on her yacht, the *Liberty*, the electric sign 'Is Anthony Eden a pansy?' Lonsdale wrote in *Blind Victory*, 'I saw several close friends and close relations of Mr Anthony Eden...and his friends were making frantic efforts to reopen contact with our Government through the intermediary of the Bishop of Stockholm. This prelate sent a special emissary to London - whom I was told Mr Eden unfortunately declined to receive.'

The non-Etonian Bracken advised Churchill on the conduct of the war and also on who should be promoted in the Church or demoted in the secret services. That other Old Etonian, Hugh Dalton, might confide to Clement Attlee that Brendan Bracken was not fit to be a minister in the middle of a war, but Dalton too had his secret life. Years later when I wrote about the Barry School, or Beulah Bible Academy as Fabers re-christened it in 1962, I took an impish pleasure over *The Protege* by changing the real 'Mrs Wills' to the

supposedly libel-proof 'Mrs Curry-Gowan', without Alan Pringle being aware that 'Curry' was Cory, and 'Gowan' was McGowan.

In any case, Lonsdale Bryans thought Pringle's libel paranoia ridiculous since none other than Fabers themselves had widely let it be known that I had lived with the Wills family, for in December 1959 the publishers sent out review copies of *No Surrender* with a publicity slip stating my 'life changed when he became a protege of a branch of the well-known West Country family of Wills,' to quote the **Belfast Telegraph**. This was one of the newspapers whose back-numbers Ernest Bryans and his nephew Lonsdale researched for the Bryans family tree in the 1920s and 30s, and Maxwell Bryans in the 1960s, an occupation they found no less entertaining than seeing Tibby Lecky-Browne-Lecky in drag at Ecclesville.

T S Eliot knew perfectly well that his fellow directors name-dropped him, hence his faked letter to them on Camden Council notepaper saying the council was going to erect an equestrian statue by A J Munnings to include statues of all the directors, in Russell Square opposite Faber's office, and the town clerk hoped the directors did not mind being portrayed in concrete since white marble was too expensive. Eliot enjoyed his first wife's ability to write a good satire on the pompous name-droppers for the **Criterion** magazine and she, in turn, felt justified in stuffing parcels of shit into Faber's letter-box. Whereas Morley Kennerley had no scruples in using his office to promote vanity-publishing such as Barbara Hutton's poetry in return for handsome remunerations, Alan Pringle was the opposite, a totally dedicated non-pecuniary publisher of the old Bloomsbury school. I expected *The Protege* to go into production within weeks, because Fabers had brought out my eight previous books for them in three years, but Alan Pringle had the manuscript for nearly a year, going over it line by line.

The main hold-up concerned the exact nature of Ouspensky's influence over other Faber authors and Pringle did not get it right, mistakenly writing, for example, that Frank Shelley-Mills 'knew very little about Ouspensky and his activities.' I immediately countered this in writing on 16 December 1962 by referring to what Dil de Rohan had published in *Envoy* about Gurdjieff and Ouspensky followers, including the then still-living Aldous Huxley. My earlier Brazil book touched on the Kenneth Walker groups I met in Rio de Janeiro, as distinct from the Gurdjieff and Ouspensky centres, and Fabers had sent a copy of that book to Walker, and so Pringle's report on *The Protege* more amused than angered me, especially as his final editing which got into print showed Pringle's utter confusion. His libel defences collapsed because in several places Shelley-Mills appears as running the Eaton Square Ouspensky group under his real name 'Frank' instead of the libel-pseudonym 'Martin,' a point picked out gleefully by reviewers of *The Protege* such as that literary

Sherlock Holmes, Martin Seymour-Smith in *The Scotsman*.

But not until 1984, when Peter Ackroyd's biography of Eliot came out, did I read how the poet 'attended seances...at which P D Ouspensky' presided. That Eliot left his first wife to live with Bishop Scott-Hall, the fellow-prelate of Archbishop Shelley-Mills in the Old Catholic Church was not allowed in *The Protege*. Yet despite the 'Name changes all through' Pringle had no wish to alter the names of Eliot's enemies, Evan Tredegar and Alfred Douglas nor to obscure their association with Lanson House and Lloyd George.

Charles Monteith was right in saying I had 'excellent relations' with 'the Portuguese authorities,' but those relations had been developed via Lonsdale Bryans and Donald Darling during the war in connection with their efforts to save millions of Jews and since it seemed inappropriate to use those 'excellent relations' from my stays in Lisbon for another Faber commissioned book, I turned the offer down especially as I had agreed to remain in Canada in 1967 and write with Adeline de la Feld the spoof novel on Anthony Blunt's royal past.

My refusal to Charles Monteith's entirely reasonable request contrasted with another author who longed for a Faber commission. This was the New Zealander Robert Sencourt who had known T S Eliot since 1927 and had witnessed some of the unfortunate troubles with the first Mrs Eliot. He caused a literary rumpus when for another publisher he produced *T S Eliot, A Memoir* which contained innuendoes about Eliot and misogyny and homosexuality with a French student, Jean Verdenal, who had drowned and therefore could not confirm or deny that there was an 'affinity of hearts' between himself and the young American poet, Tom Eliot.

Father Cheetham gave Eliot spiritual guidance as well as lodging at St Stephen's Vicarage, but the poet also consulted Father Frank Hillier who became vicar of St Silas-the-Martyr, Kentish Town, in 1930 and was still presiding there in 1960 when he excitedly informed me that the editor of the **Church Times** was going to devote the whole of his 'Editor's Table' to reviewing the autobiography of my childhood, *No Surrender*, an excitement repeated when that Anglican newspaper said of my *Up Spake the Cabin Boy*, 'Judging from this entirely delightful record, Kelham missed a lively recruit.'

Before Charles Monteith asked me to write a book about Portugal in a letter to me of 7 August 1967, he had earlier on the 13 September 1966, written to me, 'So far as financial rewards up to the moment of your travel books are concerned, we are all very conscious, I assure you, that the large personal financial outlay that you have to make to accumulate the necessary material and the experience for these books comes nowhere near to being offset by the books' royalty earnings. The best evidence of this, indeed, is the

fact that to my knowledge the British income tax authorities always allowed you to claim these sums as necessary expenses incurred in connection with writing the books...Once, of course, you are established in the United States, the overall financial picture should undergo a complete transformation in your favour, and in the meantime, as you know, you have established for yourself here a secure place among the ranks of really first-class travel writers, since you combine, as few writers do, great literary grace and skill with tremendous care over accuracy in detail. This is the sort of reputation which is bound to grow very surely, if perhaps more slowly than we would all wish, and its growth is bound to be reflected in steadily increasing sales.'

Certainly my first Faber book *No Surrender* sold many more copies in 1991 than in 1961 when the first Faber edition was out. 'The large personal financial outlay' that made my Faber commissioned travel books possible was not my money since I had no private means as shown by the fact that I could not afford to leave my furniture and books with a commercial storage firm and kept them instead at Fabers in Russell Square during the years I lived in Canada and elsewhere. All sums I borrowed came from people who like the Faber directors, believed my books would make a considerable profit once the American rights were sold. Fabers' lawyer wanted a written list of these investors and I supplied it because the investors consulted their own legal advisers before transferring their funds into Fabers' commissions. Adeline de la Feld's adviser, Major Cuthbert Holmes, was Sir Geoffrey Faber's barrister friend, but the major was worried by Monteith's letter which mentioned the British income tax authorities while ignoring the fact that I was living in Canada and that Canadian residents were investing money in Faber commissioned books at a time of stringent currency regulations imposed by the Bank of England that, for example, prevented Adeline de la Feld from taking capital out of London from the Duke of Newcastle's estate.

My own lawyer in London advised on the interest rate on the investments and kept important documents relating to them in his office safe along with tape-recordings of telephone calls concerning my first High Court writ of 1963 when he won me damages from the young-man-about town who drank too much champagne at Paul Getty's famous Sutton Place party. My lawyer had met Faber staff at my home but he could hardly go into the witness box and accuse them of breaking currency regulations since the lawyer himself was paying into my Barclay's sterling accounts sums of money that I was asked to send in Canadian dollars to Washington for the entertainment there of both Tory and Labour politicians and a leader of the World Bank. The money I was obliged to borrow for my Faber commissions looked like petty cash compared with the billions of dollars over which those same politicians would later face charges in the law courts on both sides of the Atlantic as the

Daily Telegraph reported.

It particularly interested me in 1980 to review *The Oxford Book Of Satirical Verse* chosen by Geoffrey Grigson, and I wrote, 'It depends, of course, on what you mean by "satire." Geoffrey Grigson stoutly declines to define it, but admits that he's been rather elastic about what he's let in and kept out. The book's jacket tells the reader at once what the book is about. It is a detail from Hogarth's painting of "The Bench" showing a supercilious judge about to write a judgment. Because of England's archaic laws of libel the absurdity survives today whereby supercilious judges ponderously decide whether poems go too far in attacking abuses. Generally, however, the serpent satire is most venomous when most subtle. Its bitterness is best when mildly expressed, as though written for children, not adults, like the *eventyr* of Hans Andersen whose tragic writings are by no means the fairy tales people think they are...And yet another surprise, but of a different sort, is Geoffrey Grigson's quoting of T S Eliot's tenet about "the object satirised disappearing in the poetry." Mr Grigson adds that what satirists wrote "never caused them pain. They have enjoyed it; and we enjoy what they have written, without apology." But surely the poison spread by Eliot about the Jews in "Burbank with a Baedeker; Bleistein with a Cigar," and elsewhere, was certainly not enjoyed by many people of many races, as the mass of published evidence shows.'

My lawyer always wrote to me by hand from his home which had once housed Winston Churchill and family, a point the lawyer loved impressing upon his guests, although the only Churchill relation who called during the weeks I stayed there was Shane Leslie bringing me old press cuttings about his Irish National cause and life with Evan Tredegar. Remembering how not even Prime Minister Churchill could save his friend Ivor Novello from imprisonment over illegal wartime petrol, I took care to get Fabers to publish an *eventyr* on the lawyer who, while being highly critical of contracts for my books was, at the same time, using his heiress wife's money to send dollars illegally to Washington. The irony in the situation would have intrigued both T S Eliot had he still been alive, for he had many dealings over the years with the lawyer's family business, and those still-living people who claim to have known life at Eliot's flat better than Christopher Sykes. Although this *eventyr* was set before Mr Justice Swanwick, nobody tried to explain it because too many international complications lurked in it.

That Charles Monteith couched his letter in the vein of, 'Is there any chance at all, I wonder, of persuading you to tackle' a book on Portugal shows his awareness of my reluctance and in view of his comment in the previous year about 'the large personal financial outlay' needed for my travel books, I can fully understand his resort to such terms as 'persuading' me. But by 7

August 1967 when Monteith wrote to me, Adeline's Hope diamonds had been sold at Christie's and the proceeds had gone in error to Fabers, creating there the entirely false impression that I was awash with a diamond fortune. When Monteith wrote, 'we are all very conscious, I assure you,' the 'we' must have included Morley Kennerley who sent an internal memo to Monteith dated 10 July 1963 when Collins had just asked me to write a travel book. Morley wrote that 'we certainly do not want to lose' me, and Monteith added that my 'travel books are, I suspect, going to be very useful properties.'

When Morley saw me in Fabers' hallway and their accountant produced the mysterious cheque from Christies, Morley laughed at the idea of Adeline selling her famous heirlooms in order to send the proceeds to the already rich Church Commissioners, one of London's major landlords. There was I, emerging from Fabers' warehouse after getting papers from my desk and changing my clothes because I could not afford commercial storage rates, while at the same time approving Adeline's gift of the jewel sale proceeds to the Church Commissioners, a wealthy charity which Morley deemed, and rightly as it turned out, would not carry out her instructions.

Morley had met Adeline and her English and Italian relations through Barbara Hutton. In his Hutton biography David Heymann wrote, 'In December 1931, much to Louise's relief, Barbara departed for London to visit Morley and Jean Kennerley. Jean, the daughter of Lord Alfred Simpson-Baikie, honorary Lieutenant Governor of Orkney and Shetland Islands, first met Barbara at Biarritz in the summer of 1926. Jean was vivacious and outgoing, every inch the outrageous patrician debutante of the thirties.'

Adeline had good reason to remember Mr Alfred Baikie who had been Vice-Lieutenant of Orkney and Shetland for many years and during World War One was the Assistant Controller of Filling Factories at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, with whom Adeline consulted about her work with the Russian Munitions Supply Commission. Because the despised 2nd Duke of Westminster was Personal Assistant to the Controller at the Ministry of Munitions the duke also had a say in these matters. People regarded the whole enterprise as a bit of a joke when the vast supply of British ammunition arrived in Moscow and would not fit the Russian guns or rifles.

Getting the right size of underwear to send off for Adeline in Canada concerned Bridget Parsons and me for a number of years. With the capital of Adeline's English estate frozen in England by currency restrictions and with Bridget having taken over the family role in running the Deptford Institute, a lot of communication passed between Bridget's flat at Lennox Gardens in Kensington and Aunt Ad on Vancouver Island. Occasionally Father Hillier and I would be called in when unusual events needed sorting out at the institute. Anything destined for Adeline's signature should have been sent by

airmail but often the documents were sent by sea which took weeks to reach an infuriated Adeline. Bridget always bought her aunt's clothes on a London sterling account, and the size in 1937 had been the same size as her own. But the years saw Bridget much swollen with her affliction while old age made Adeline shrink, which led to vociferous complaints on Canadian airmail paper arriving at Lennox Gardens from where, at last, I was able to take underclothes direct to Adeline when I started to cross the Atlantic by air.

Also in Lennox Gardens lived the widow of Brig-General Sir Hugh Archie Dundas Simpson-Baikie whom I believed to be the mother of Jean Kennerley, judging from the occasions I met them together. One such meeting occurred when I was with Bridget after T S Eliot's death in 1965 when Lady Simpson-Baikie, knowing of Bridget's support for certain poets over the years, asked sweetly if I would be taking Bridget to the Eliot memorial service at Westminster Abbey. But Bridget's alcoholic temper flared up and she poured vitriol on the old lady, and continued her abuse outside in the street and 'was very loquacious and inclined to be bombastic' as police doctor Noel Moynihan had certified five years previously over Bridget's arrest on a drunken charge.

Bridget increasingly resembled her ex-friend, Nancy Cunard, the notable exception being that Bridget made no attacks on male genitals and mostly kept her torrents of abuse for people, especially Americans, she saw as upstarts or pretenders to European titles. Certainly there had never been any such person as appeared in the biography of Barbara Hutton, for the supposed Lord Alfred Simpson-Baikie, the engineer for the Orkneys, had been born plain Alfred Cowan in 1861, assuming the name Baikie in 1898.

Dressed in an ivory satin gown heavily embroidered with seed pearls and trailing a six-foot train, Barbara Hutton, the 5 & 10 Cent Store heiress, dropped her curtsy to King George V. and Queen Mary at Buckingham Palace on 19 May 1931. Barbara wrote, 'this is certainly the most prestigious ritual of its kind in the world' and yet the King's 'face was twisted behind an expression of supreme indifference. He could barely keep his eyes open.' The following day Barbara went to a garden party attended by the Prince of Wales who, she noted, 'was deft and light on his feet, a good dancer. He was also very cheerful, almost too cheerful, a bit tipsy maybe. Its hard to imagine him as the future King of England.'

Jean Kennerley probably got it right in thinking that her husband and Barbara Hutton behaved like 'brother and sister' as could be seen on 22 June 1933 in Paris at the Russian Cathedral of St Alexander Nevsky on the Rue Daru when Barbara married Prince Alexis Mdivani. On this occasion Barbara's dress had an eight-foot train, but in Russian fashion, as there were no bridesmaids, the prince and princess hand-picked their ushers who, in

morning suits, held the richly jewelled crowns over the bridal pair as they twice circled the altar with the high priest. Barbara chose two Americans as ushers, cousin Jimmy Donahue and 'brother' Morley Kennerley. The two Russian ushers were Prince Theodore and the dancer Serge Lifar, the jealous lover of Diaghilev. On their honeymoon the Mdivanis took 70 pieces of luggage, each trunk embossed with a crown. They called on Gabrielle D'Annunzio who gave them a present of Arthur Waley's 1929 English translation of **The Tale of Genji**.

These 11th century court writings by the courtesan, Murasaki Shikibu, influenced Barbara Hutton's writing. Her publisher/brother Morley Kennerley, like me, would have much to do with Arthur Waley who, as Osbert Sitwell wrote, had 'perhaps the greatest range of friendship of any person I know.' Long before Geoffrey Faber started his publishing house at 24 Russell Square, Arthur Waley and his girlfriend, Beryl de Zoete the ballet critic, had a flat in the square. In 1938 Fabers published Beryl's **Dance and Drama in Bali**.

Russell Square was convenient for Arthur Waley because he was the Assistant Keeper in the Department of Prints and Drawings at the nearby British Museum whose Reading Room Adeline used when translating Russian and Italian. Adeline knew Waley well by 1929 when he gave up his job in the print department to become a full-time poet and translator on the strength of the six volumes of the Japanese masterpiece, **The Tale of Genji's** success. When Adeline's nephew Desmond Parsons decided to travel in China and translate its poets, she introduced him to Arthur Waley and Beryl de Zoete. Desmond's family friend in Peking, Harold Acton, noted in his **More Memoirs of an Aesthete**, that even in the 1930s, when Beryl was nearly 50, her belly-dance could rival that of Casablanca's girls.

Beryl and Peter Churchill were **New Statesman** critics and she loved taking gay young men to see the film or stage ballets under review with choreography by her Russian friend Catherine Devilliers who from 1944 was also a neighbour when Devilliers and Dil de Rohan moved into Selwyn House. By the time the Faber staff came to see my new Bloomsbury home at Guilford Street in 1961 the publishers had brought out Beryl's last pioneering book on dance, **Dance and Magic Drama in Ceylon**. By then Arthur and Beryl had moved into one of the beautiful old houses in Gordon Square owned by London University which was also Dil de Rohan's landlord.

Adeline de la Feld got a shock when Arthur Waley died in 1966 aged 76, for he left a widow, not Beryl but the New Zealand poet Alison Grant Robinson whom he married a month before his death, she having been his mistress for twenty years concurrent with Beryl. Since Alison lived in Handel Street close to Wyn Henderson, Arthur and I often sat in St George's Garden

that lay between our homes, discussing the latest books we were reviewing. When Arthur set up his separate household with Alison they gave a house-warming party and she divided the men on her guest list into two groups, 'Norm' and 'Queer.' There were only three 'Norms' with a question mark after one of them, but numerous 'Queers.' Alison wrote in her memoir, **A Half of Two Lives**, 'Arthur scrutinised this for but the fraction of an instant with his microscopic eye. Then he made his comment - terse as always and to the point: "No buggers - no Party.'

Although Fabers published Beryl's books, T S Eliot asked Arthur to bring Alison to afternoon tea at the flat he shared with John Hayward. Arthur, so disliking Hayward, refused to go, and Alison wrote afterwards, 'Arriving at the Chelsea house Tom shares, we find ourselves, a small party, circled, backs to the window, about the figure of John Hayward, the great purplish mass of his body overlapping, all but concealing, the heavy frame of his invalid chair. It is thrust forward into full light, to centre-stage as it were, by Tom Eliot who then steps back into shadow and stands strangely at attention. It was some time since I had seen him...the face lined, leathery, uncommunicative as a tortoise; detached, yet made grey with some inner distress. A day on which I am to exclaim to Arthur, "Good God! What has happened to Tom!"...No man, I am thinking, especially one of genius, should be a lackey...At what following period did Arthur bound up my stair, buoyant with news? "They're all at it - all the telephones are buzzing - they're meeting to decide what to do!" There is excitement in his face. But also pleasure. "About what?" I ask. "Tom! He's left! Just a note for John on the kitchen table in the early morning - "I've Gone.Tom." I snatch at Arthur's waving hand - it is as though it waves to a ship in sail. I cry: "Wonderful! Splendid! I've gone. Tom." The best poem Eliot ever wrote! But Arthur's face is suddenly grave. "Tom...is...a saint."

Those who knew of Eliot's patience over the years and Hayward's abuse of his saintly behaviour, took Arthur Waley's stance over the disabled Hayward who nevertheless, had supporters with old grudges against Eliot who had refused to publish their work. Alison Grant arrived in England from New Zealand in 1929 with a letter of introduction to Dil de Rohan's cousin, Sir Evelyn Wrench, editor of the **Spectator** and head of the English-Speaking Union.

There were two John Wrench cousins, Dil's brother, and the other better known as Evelyn who had not only been born on the Brookeborough estate in County Fermanagh in 1882, but in 1937 married Hylda Brooke, and all took interest when Prime Minister Lord Brookeborough named a racehorse **Song of Erne** after the book which evokes my Fermanagh childhood as an evacuee from Belfast. In 1965 London University threatened to demolish

Selwyn House where Dil de Rohan lived and to extend its Indian Hostel on the site. Dil hurled abuse at Gilbert Laithwaite for wielding considerable influence over the University's Indian policies, abuse which he retailed at the Traveller's Club of which he was chairman and his old friend Evelyn Wrench a member. Wrench had also founded the Royal Over-Seas League and had been Deputy Controller of the British Empire and U S A Sections of the Ministry of Information. 1965 also saw the emergence of the fact that our wartime activities involving the Ministry of Information would never be allowed to come out in court, matters that were successfully injunctioned in 1991.

As long ago as 1929, Alison Grant had come to her own, not very favourable conclusions about the Irish blarney of Evelyn Wrench who, with Brendan Bracken, formed a pair of wily Irishmen quite capable of dealing with the devious Princess de Rohan, nee Dil Wrench. Alison wrote in her 1982 book how she told Arthur Waley that she had burnt the letter of introduction to Evelyn Wrench 'in the open grate.' Had Dil still been alive to read of the burnt letter, she would have been enraged because the aggressive Dil belonged firmly to Beryl de Zoete's camp, whereas Wyn Henderson sided with Alison who was not only Wyn's neighbour but who, as a young woman poet newly-arrived from New Zealand, enjoyed the questionable privilege of attracting the attention of Wyn's old lover Havelock Ellis who had been 'always willing to talk in snow or yellow sunshine.' It does not require much imagination to guess what 'Havelick Pelvis,' to quote Dylan Thomas, talked to the young poetess about.

John Mortimer's *Clinging to the Wreckage* reports that Havelock Ellis taught Wyn to pee standing up, and the same book tells how Dylan Thomas took Mortimer 'looking for a girl with an aperture as small as a mouse's ear-hole, led us to the offices of *Horizon*.' As chance or the curve of fate would have it, *Horizon*'s office occupied the ground floor of part of Selwyn House while Dil lived at the top, very proud of the fact that, her bulk notwithstanding, her feet were so small that she had to wear child's shoes. Death also deprived Dil of the luxury of wrath over another book, the actor David Niven's *The Moon's a Balloon* in which he described Barbara Hutton as 'a petite snubnosed blond, very pretty American girl with the smallest feet I had ever seen.' Nothing provoked Dil's aggression more than a reminder that Barbara had smaller feet than hers, although Dil might have giggled at Dylan Thomas's often-repeated remark that Dil's aperture was as small as a mouse's ear-hole.

Dylan and Wyn, Bertie Rodgers and Louis MacNeice had been regulars at The Lamb pub but of all the poets I knew there only David Wright, author of *Monologue of a Deaf Man* survives. On 4 April 1965 he sent me

this letter after I did a BBC review of his work, 'Very many thanks indeed for your extremely flattering broadcast about the Algarve book and my poems. Pip, my wife, listened in to it for me and told me that not only what you said but how you said it made both the books seem better than they are. She added that your reading of the poem was the best she'd heard on the BBC - of the readings of my poems that is. I also had the same comment from Charles Sisson, who also heard the broadcast. I've been in the Lamb once or twice, but no sign of you. Fun and games in the New Statesman!!' Ever David.'

New Statesman staff not only drank at The Lamb but booked a room upstairs where Tom Driberg and other Labour MPs planned Party policy. When Times Newspapers moved into Gray's Inn Road The Lamb became more a press watering hole than the local for poets and actors. Gone too were the days when Miss Dillon cycled around the Bloomsbury publishers to buy books for her shop which by 1963 had grown into an internationally-known concern where the founder's Personal Assistant was Mrs Nique Austin. The Austins too had been regular features of The Lamb and as he was a senior detective other police dropped in, especially Bob Pocock who had retired from the force to become a BBC producer with his drinking companion, Louis MacNeice. On their last pub-crawl Louis and Bob had to spend the night in police cells.

On 20 February 1965 Dil wrote to me from Spain, 'Frightfully funny, I wrote to Nique because I needed a couple of books sent to people who had shown me great hospitality here, I also said that if that mountain of a female had put in as much energy to locate my stolen property as she'd put in trying to borrow the car, she would have had a rich reward by now. Nique wrote back agreeing and said the female mountain had also tried to borrow their car and had been turned down.' Because I was helping the Gray's Inn Road police with Dil's allegedly stolen pictures, Dil enclosed with her letter the quoted one from Nique which said, 'I too am so sorry Hemingway is dead as I would love to see you punch him on the kisser - such language Dil.'

To everything Dylan Thomas said, Dil had an even more outrageous riposte, but valued her fists more than her tongue and boasted of her fights in Paris with Ernest Hemingway when Dil thought he had mocked Gertrude Stein and her lesbian friends. But in 1963 Dil's fisticuffs got her banned from The Lamb for a time. She liked to sit chatting up women in the pub with a shoe off so that somebody would pick it up and remark on its being a child's size so giving Dil an excuse for talk of a more intimate kind. Once, when Dil got as far as groping a woman her husband complained and Dil invited him outside for a proper fight. More than a blow 'on the kisser' resulted and after being banned from The Lamb Dil decamped to a pub on the corner of Great James Street which housed many lawyers by day and some 'enigmatic, furtive

characters' by night according to Alison Waley's *A Half of Two Lives*. At first a dozen or so followed her but after a time we drifted back to The Lamb and Dil started spending most of the year in Spain.

Yet another upheaval occurred when London University decided Arthur Waley and Beryl de Zoete must leave their home in Gordon Square. Beryl had become quite mad and corroded by jealousy over Alison even though, as a Somerset House search revealed, Beryl was now 86 years old. Then religion entered the fray. Having lived with Arthur for 50 years Beryl suddenly declared herself to be like him, Jewish. Alison disputed this claim, telling Arthur, 'Because she has none of the Jewish qualities...And because you are a Jew. I cannot believe that one Jew could so persecute another.' But could one lesbian persecute another like Dil battering Katusha with the frying-pan? No wonder such characters drew Tom and Vivien Eliot and all the others to Bloomsbury.

Beryl was too far gone to house-hunt, so Alison drove Arthur in search of a new home for them, and she wrote, 'We turned towards the north - as giving easy access to Bloomsbury: to the British Museum, the School of Asiatic Studies, the Courtauld Gallery, the parks and gardens and squares of our native haunts.' Since 1944 I haunted those places too in between my visits abroad to write travel books or lecture, absences during which I left the keys of Dil's Selwyn House flat with Enriqueta Harris who worked in Woburn Square as Curator of the Photographic Collection at the Warburg Institute, a London University establishment similar to the adjoining Courtauld Gallery of which Anthony Blunt was director. Not only had Blunt started his art history career in Woburn Square, but Enriqueta Harris's husband, Henri Frankfort, had been the Warburg's director and author of *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient*, a book which particularly interested the 20th century's greatest translator of Eastern languages, Arthur Waley.

Because Toby, Enriqueta's current Bedlington dog, was unwell at this time she took him daily to the Warburg and I would sometimes come out from my research at the British Museum Reading Room to walk Toby in Woburn Square at the end of which lay Fabers' backyard and staff car park, not that T S Eliot drove a car. Although Arthur Waley refused to visit his old friend Eliot at John Hayward's flat, Arthur liked to meet Eliot casually in Russell Square, the setting for so much in both their lives, where Eliot was easier to talk to than at formal cocktail parties in the Faber boardroom. Ironically, although Eliot is branded over his youthful anti-Semitic remarks, our mutual Jewish friends in fact knew Eliot well, and more than the Jewish Arthur Waley called 'Tom a saint.'

Nobody canonised Dil de Rohan in this way. When the war began in 1939 and Mary Oliver busied herself in New York enamoured with Jane

Bowles, Dil hid her mother's jewelry in the extensive grounds of Pembroke Lodge in case of a German invasion or inquisitive young commandos who soon made their headquarters in the main part of Pembroke Lodge. After the house burnt down in 1942 Dil was not allowed back into the army-guarded grounds until after the war and by then brambles and young trees had totally disfigured the landscape and she could not locate her hidden jewels. She felt particularly excited twenty years later to be given the small green van by Enriqueta Harris which enabled Dil and me to go searching for her now-dead mother's gems.

Arthur Waley had known Pembroke Lodge from the days of the Russell occupation, and Alison wrote, 'Each day we go the rounds of our "estate" - the great park at our doors - until each horizon, each outline, each family of deer, each pool, each burnished clump of rushes, is known to us: is ours. When the wind strides, we make for Pembroke Lodge and picnic in the warmth of its western facade, the tall youthful ghost of Bertie Russell moving between the squirrel-live oaks and the slender birches.'

At last Beryl's 'froth streams from the gnashing empty jaws and the enormous cavern of the mouth filled with a greenish foam' stopped and after her funeral Arthur moved with his vast library to 22 Great James Street so hated by Alison. From a Welsh milk shop halfway between his flat and mine we both bought midday rations for Alison refused to live in Great James Street and kept her own home in Handel Street. Although all of us reading in the British Museum regarded Arthur as the genius behind the translation of *A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* he seemed still to belong to the Museum of 1939 when Louis MacNeice wrote a poem about the Reading Room of 'Cranks, hacks, poverty-stricken scholars.'

A relation of Louis's lived a few doors away from Arthur's new flat in Great James Street and I also introduced Arthur to another such relation, Canon W G MacNeice whose Chinese daughter-in-law, Yuen Peng Loke Yew, became Lady MacNeice on marrying the canon's son. The poverty-stricken scholars were noted for their dress, and if anyone dared to laugh at Mrs MacDonald as she turned up to read Eastern scripts dressed in strange clothes on her man's bicycle, she spat in their faces. Wilfrid Blunt's autobiography recalls his family's 'Dead secret' which he and his brother Anthony were forbidden to divulge, namely that Queen Mary passed on her clothes to Mrs Blunt and her sisters. Certainly no secret shrouded the fact that for most of his life Arthur Waley wore clothes from Queen Mary's brother, the Duke of Teck, for Alison wrote, 'Arthur has risen and, the Duke of Teck's overcoat billowing out behind him, is approaching with arms outstretched.'

Dil de Rohan concerned herself over the Duke of Teck's home in Richmond Park nearly as much as she did over her own years with Mary

Oliver at Pembroke Lodge, situated in the same royal estate. The great Chinese scholar had been born into a Manchester family called Schloss and later changed his name to Arthur Waley, and the fact that he went around in a decidedly ancient, royal cast-off overcoat, corresponded with Princess Carlos de Rohan's idea of what 'poverty-stricken scholars' might be expected to do. And then, suddenly, the seemingly poverty-stricken Arthur made a financial gesture that struck each of us momentarily dumb with disbelief when we heard the news.

One day in 1962 Alison was out in the car with Arthur 'just before the Highgate School where Tom Eliot had taught in his prime' when they saw a For Sale sign on a beautiful house not far from the school. The estate agent was about to close when Arthur entered and said 'I wish to buy a house. Number 50 Southwood Lane.' The agent thought that perhaps they could wait until tomorrow and see inside the large property and have it surveyed. But no. The agent said, 'Would you care to know the price?' and got the reply, 'Immaterial. Will you take a cheque or would you prefer cash?'

When Dil de Rohan raced up in her green van to see the lovely Regency house covered in flowering wisteria, and then heard of the estate agent's amazement at the immediate purchase without any reduction of price, she did not stop to wonder where on earth the poor Chinese scholar in the Duke of Teck's ancient overcoat got the money from. 'Earth' was the word. After Beryl had died, Arthur and Alison had stayed for a month in a Richmond hotel going every day to what they called 'our estate' in the grounds of the remains of Pembroke Lodge and close to the very spot where Dil had hidden her mother's jewels in 1939.

Having levered out such a distinguished scholar as Arthur Waley from the Gordon Square flat, the London University estate agents envisaged little trouble in getting Dil out of hers at Selwyn House since she spent much of the year in Spain while illegally sub-letting at outrageous rents to the University's own post-graduate students. With her customary calculation, Dil watched carpenters putting up more and more shelves in the Great James Street flat which Arthur very occasionally used as an office. Dil had been a staunch friend to Beryl de Zoete for many years, and when the bed-ridden, demented Beryl attacked the nursing staff, Dil had taken in numerous emergency meals. So now Dil played on Arthur's good nature in an attempt to get out of her attic at Selwyn House and into the much roomier flat with fewer stairs at 22 Great James Street so conveniently set with pubs on either side.

Anybody could be forgiven for thinking this an eminently suitable arrangement, advantageous to both Arthur and Dil. However, this would be to ignore the fact that Dil, far from behaving prudently to her student lodgers at Selwyn House, went out of her way to provoke them, so that her game of

illegally sub-letting rooms came perilously close to exposure when they complained. Since I had Dil's keys during her long absences in Spain, and ran Dil's affairs jointly with Enriqueta Harris of London University who was Jewish, her lodgers turned to me for help as they too were of the Jewish faith. It seemed only right for me to refer the matter to Anthony Blunt as the senior member of the university staff involved, particularly when Dil's letters from Spain mounted racist attacks on any lodger who happened to be Jewish. Unfortunately for Dil, this conflicted with her plans to take over Arthur Waley's flat in Great James Street. In addition to his flat, Arthur also rented the basement at 22 Great James Street for storing boxes and trunks of letters dating right back to his school days at Rugby, as well as manuscripts which could not easily be kept on the bookshelves upstairs. Then, on 18 May 1963, I went to get bread at the Welsh milk shop to find David Keir, the ancient actor whom I had introduced to his neighbour Arthur, telling all and sundry that five young men had burgled Dr Waley's basement and taken 'the lot'.

Alison Waley confirmed this later when she wrote, 'When at length Arthur was physically able to consider the problem of removal it was to discover that not one fragment of the previous hoard remained. When or how this second visitation was achieved I have never been able to ascertain: for, almost at once, a curtain of silence descended on the whole affair. Arthur, pleading for a clue, was told by the Police - so I was assured - that his property was in all probability on a certain "dump" at the East End docks. And again it was said, for he himself never confided it, that he found his way to the place described and, alone, in the half-dark of evening, climbed the mountain of city refuse in search of even so much as one of his manuscripts. And this scene haunts me forever.'

A Waley translation of particular appeal is T'ao Ch'ien, 'To be untrue to myself could only lead to muddle.' Beryl de Zoete was ten years older than Arthur but admitted to only six of them, a matter of hair-splitting since she had graduated as long ago as 1901 in English at Somerville where she had been one of Oxford's early women. Like her other Oxford friends, Evan Tredegar and Lonsdale Bryans, she spoke French, German and Italian so well that she translated into German Sacheverell Sitwell's, *The Rio Grande* which Constant Lambert set to music in 1927. The Far East fascinated Beryl no less than it did Harold Acton, Desmond Parsons, Evan Tredegar and Lonsdale Bryans and she wrote her best known work on oriental dance.

Because of his own mastery of Chinese poets, people gave, or perhaps only lent, valuable books to Arthur and Beryl for their research. Beryl's sex life, or rather lack of it, featured in a number of books. Her first affair got as far as Beryl and the young man climbing naked up adjacent trees and making the branches touch, but not their own bodies. Beryl went to live with Arthur

in 1918 following a brief marriage, brief no doubt because of her terms that there should be no sex which she considered coarse. When the much younger Alison turned up from New Zealand she thought the vegetarian Beryl's habit of asking for yak's milk at cocktail parties 'Balls and bull-shit.' But when Alison gave her house-warming party she could only be certain that two of the men were 'Norms' and had to accept Arthur's decision, 'No buggers - no Party.'

Soon Alison saw her older rival for Arthur's affection as a witch, a Bali vampire. Beryl suffered from the hereditary disease Huntington's Chorea which eventually killed her. Her fidgetiness soon developed into violent twitchings. While demonic grimaces contorted her face Beryl would set fire to the house and dance as though indeed the Bali witch Alison thought her. The neighbours did not complain solely about the 'bloodcurdling screams' but also about the real possibility that they would all be burnt alive. For safety's sake, Arthur had all their manuscripts and other valuables locked away in the trunks and boxes that were eventually rifled in 1963 at Great James Street. Because Alison put up with such horror for years, Arthur himself lowered 'a curtain of silence' to protect Alison from further upset.

After Dil de Rohan turned Francis Rose out and kept his paintings in lieu of unpaid rent, solicitors' letters flew to and fro but led to no court actions, for if he really had been a lodger where was his rent-book which he could take to London University's estate agent and expose Dil for sub-letting. No action could be taken by Nancy Cunard against her former partner, Wyn Henderson, because Wyn had a right to take letters addressed to her personally about Hours Press authors. Dil and Wyn had enjoyed the battle between Alison and Beryl over Arthur Waley's love and possessions.

So to spare Alison further stress over his ties with Beryl, now dead in any case, Arthur invented the story of the police thinking that all the books and documents stolen from 22 Great James Street had been destroyed in an East End rubbish tip. They were skilled robbers who knew exactly what Arthur's trunks contained. Ironically the stolen material related to the influence of the Chinese connection in many people's lives, including my own. The Egypt General Mission had impressed and excited me as a child in Belfast almost more than anything else with its romantic images of the exotic given by William Fulton's magic lantern slides. But hardly less evocative was 'The Cause of Christ In China' brought alive for me by Bishop Hind who had come home from the distant Diocese of Fuh-Kien. Like others in Belfast with strong Chinese connections, Bishop Hind made translations but they never became best-sellers such as those of the two women missionaries, Mildred Cable and Francesca French, who wrote of their 1920s travels by bullock-cart even, or rather specially, across the Gobi Desert.

Travellers returning from China typically included old manuscripts or other writings, perhaps as gaudily painted village banners and lanterns of silk, rich with gold and scarlet, among the curios, porcelain and other works of art in their luggage, and the two lady missionaries were no exception. Their lesbian friend, Dil de Rohan, took a particular interest in all things eastern, for apart from being born in, and called after, the Dilkusha Palace in Lucknow, her father's family had long been involved in developing railways in India and China. But however beautiful the silk banners might look in Dil's living-room for a time, they had to go eventually to Arthur Waley for the Chinese scholar to translate and value.

In 1936 George Kinnaird and his mother gave a luncheon party for the Queen of Romania at Rosa Lewis's hotel, while that other former music student from Shrewsbury School, Patrick McClellan, entertained members of the first ballet company he ever joined in the pubs around Charlotte Street, a part of London Alison Waley aptly called 'that Latin Quarter of the time.' Here, in the late 1940s, Patrick and I would slip into a little Spanish restaurant where for two shillings he got his favourite dish of fresh-grilled herrings and boiled potatoes. After Patrick's mother died in 1947 I went to their Isle of Man home, Westham, and helped him pack her personal effects since one of his mother's friends, Mildred Graves, showed every sign of wanting to become Patrick's stepmother, which she did.

Mildred's fondness for the bottle soon led to the surreptitious sale of family silver and pictures which, strictly according to law, should have been sanctioned by the trustees, her stepson Patrick and his co-trustee, Robert Eason, the Chief Deemster, who certainly did not wish to see Mildred in the law courts of which he was the head. Not wanting his mother's personal things to go the same way, Patrick took them to London out of harm's way and left them in the luggage-room at the New Riviera Hotel in Grenville Street, close to Dil de Rohan. Inevitably, however, the things got dispersed, although, unlike Arthur Waley's Chinese collection and people's claims and counter-claims over what was lent or given, only one of the late Mrs McClellan's possessions actually went specifically as a gift.

This was an old family silver salver which once belonged to a General Ponsonby and which Patrick now gave as a wedding present to Robert Ponsonby who had worked with Patrick at Glyndebourne after the war and who later became a much-talked of figure in the world of music. Talk of General Ponsonby in The Lamb pub one day lit the fuse between Dil de Rohan and Tom Driberg and led to her relentless screaming of abuse at Driberg as he emerged daily from the gents' lavatory within eye-shot of Dil's windows. Their feud started in The Lamb when Driberg recalled that one of the famous pair of lesbians, 'The Ladies of Llangollen,' had been Sarah Ponsonby of Lord

Bessborough's Irish family. Driberg laughed derisively about the Llangollen lady, Sarah, and Dil gave him 'one on the kisser.' Peace never broke out between them.

The family running Patrick McClellan's New Riviera Hotel liked to speak their native Italian with Beryl de Zoete who went to the hotel with me to see if anything in Mrs McClellan's suitcases could be used for costumes in one of Katusha's ballets. What we found pleased the former star of the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet and in her good-natured way did not mind when we laughed at the language of her thanks, typified by Dil in *How Do You Do?* where she tells of returning to London after more than four years in Paris, 'When I opened the laundry book, I found Katusha had regularly headed her list, 8 Shits. 4 Pillar Cases. 3 Bathing Trowels. 1 Table Clothing.'

Katusha never let pedantic niceties over the English language block her flow of lively talk, and with Dil away in Paris, Katusha could always turn to the polyglot Beryl de Zoete for help about words. Beryl's ballet involvements led her also to Mrs McClellan's rescued clothes and it pleased Patrick for them to be used on the ballet stage or in one of Katusha's films. Nobody said, because nobody asked, about what was given or lent, and no squabbles resulted, and no money changed hands except for a few drinks in The Lamb before a Russian feast put on by Katusha. Arthur Waley's trunks in the basement of 22 Great James Street aroused a different emotion, although Alison admits in her story of life with Arthur, that even she did not know whether the Duke of Teck's weatherbeaten overcoat had been 'lent or given'.

I cannot write about the McClellans of Westham without recalling their Manx neighbours, the Stevensons of Balladoole. I introduced Ralph Stevenson as a patient to Stephen Ward, which, as so often happened, led to a friendship between them. On the eve of Stephen's suicide he wrote an account of Ralph's term as British Ambassador in China from 1946. Ralph had been Principal Private Secretary to Foreign Secretary Halifax and so knew the strength and weaknesses of Lonsdale Bryans's peace mission for the German Resistance. Ralph retained the confidence of Anthony Eden who had him as Ambassador to Egypt during the Suez crisis. On retirement Ralph became Chairman of the Isle of Man Electricity Board, but our mutual friend in Cairo, Egerton Herbert Norman, the Canadian Ambassador, so wearied of the witch-hunt against him by the Senate Judiciary Committee that on the morning of 4 April 1957 he jumped off an apartment building and killed himself too. He had fitted into the Blunt set at Cambridge through distinction as a Japanese scholar in the vein of Arthur Waley.

Stephen Ward showed his warmth to others again when the whole Bolshoi Theatre Ballet came to London in 1956 and paid tribute to Katusha. Stephen felt pleased for her, as we all did when her smiling photograph

became the only postwar addition to The Lamb pub's well-known photo collection of famous names in the theatre and politics. Virginia Woolf and her habitat in literary Bloomsbury were depicted well in *The Boy at the Hogarth Press*, namely Richard Kennedy, whom Fabers commissioned to do jackets for several of my books.

Dil de Rohan's *How Do You Do?* went through Bloomsbury channels into the hands of BBC Television who asked Cherry Hughes to research what Dil had written and rewritten up until 1951, such as, 'I saw a lot of generous, impetuous Sir Francis Rose, to whom I am devoted, "No Rose without a thorn" might be his motto! Tennessee Williams and Jane and Paul Bowles too, but no one could shake me out of my despicable misery.' But Dil and Rose became a case of thieves falling out and after she literally threw him out of Selwyn House, allegations erupted about wartime allegiances, Rose accusing her of manifold treacheries, such as using her job at the Ministry of Information to spirit money she stole out of Britain, while Dil beat him mercilessly with the 'thorns', mainly with hints about the killings that went with various break-ins. Where other spy-catching authors failed, Cherry Hughes succeeded through meticulous research and courtesy, although one of the people she interviewed at my suggestion subsequently caused mischief, but music came to the rescue in the person of Cherry's daughter, Melinda, a soprano who, already as a schoolgirl, had come to my music studio to sing duets written by Daniel Schorno and later, in 1991 for a Christmas recital to perform a song-cycle by George Balcombe. Episodes like that, occasionally brightened the otherwise long and sorry Blunt saga in law courts on both sides of the Atlantic.

Another, if oblique literary connection with spying and China was Gerald Hamilton who liked to claim he was related to Dil's childhood guardian, Lord Ernest Hamilton, the Ulster author. The son of a Shanghai merchant, Gerald too pricked up his ears at talk about Mildred Cable's Chinese manuscripts. Dil had known the decrepit Gerald of the 1960s in his heyday as 'Mr Norris' in Christopher Isherwood's *Berlin*, and later when he moved his vice squad to Tangier. Gerald and his whisky bottle were safely ensconced above the Good Earth Chinese Restaurant on the King's Road in Chelsea when Dil telephoned before Beryl de Zoete's death in 1962 to get Arthur Waley to put in writing what had been borrowed.

In his obituary of Beryl in *The Times*, Harold Acton wrote, 'She stepped like the Queen of Sheba through Gordon Square in spiritual communion with all singing birds and blossoming branches and I think she understood their language as Arthur Waley understands the most ancient of Chinese ideograms.' Acton wrote to me about our other mutual friend and balletomane, Bridget Parsons, 'But she gave an impression of sulkiness and dissatisfaction

with life as she grew older,' an observation which could equally well have applied to the aged Beryl. I had known and written about victims of Huntington's Chorea as St Vitus Dancers jerking their way to empty bed-pans in Ulster workhouses. But Beryl's seizures became so violent that often she just lay on the floor flaying the air.

Gerald Hamilton had been in so many tight corners in his long career of international crime involving people in very high places that he daily expected some avenger to catch up with him, and people said that he carried cyanide pills under his wig in case of emergency. Shortly after Gerald's visit to the Gordon Square flat, Arthur Waley was rushed off to University College Hospital following an overdose. The police and fire brigade both took the view that for public safety Beryl should be certified to stop her fire-raising fits, but Arthur doggedly refused and neighbours hearing Beryl's terrible screams openly talked about murder. But just as Alison did not know, when writing of the strange Waley household, whether the Duke of Teck's overcoat had been given or lent, so she never found out whether Arthur's overdose was self-administered or given by someone else.

When Beryl became motionless at last, only Arthur went to the crematorium chapel and Alison asked in writing of Beryl, 'Where are her thousand acquaintances? Her hundred friends? Her hundred enemies? Where are her "lovers" - those fascinated, those in terror?' Many that Beryl had fascinated came to be terrified of her. One ever-so-smart young man had his painted face lacerated by Beryl's cat-claw hands and afterwards took malicious pleasure in mimicking her involuntary jerking, and getting cheap laughs from any of Beryl's 'hundred enemies' he could find in the pubs. Arthur soon heard about this and so made the funeral completely private. Arthur, however, lived long enough to read my reproof of the painted young man in my send-up of his 'Last Supper' at Gordon Square with Beryl.

Robin Maugham and the painted young man were much involved with Gerald Hamilton. Robin's compromising diaries were stolen in 1991, long after his death, while during his lifetime he knew how the theft of documents affected his friend Kenneth de Courcy, editor of **Intelligence Digest** and Chairman of the Businessman's Christian Association. The Bible Shop at the Barry School of Evangelism stocked books published by de Courcy's firm and on 20 March 1984, he wrote to me about the Barry School's founder, 'The de Courcy-Hamiltons I have never met albeit my late cousin Krika de Blumer's grandmother was one. Robin Maugham's father was once Lord Chancellor and my Mother knew him and was pleasant to his son. Later on Robin displayed tendencies which neither I nor my Mother liked and he was dropped from her visitors' list. I only once met Lady Cory when Lord Rushcliffe asked me if I would accept an invitation to an Evening Party at 28

Belgrave Square. As he had been one of Mr Baldwin's Cabinet Ministers I duly accepted.'

Adeline de la Feld regarded **Intelligence Digest** as 'alarmist' as did Anthony Blunt and his Cambridge associates. In February 1943, Winston Churchill went to Moscow for his famous 'man to man' talks with Stalin. Hugh Dalton wrote in his wartime diary, 'Further, they attach quite undue importance to small things said and published here. Stalin, for instance, referred to the publications of de Courcy, Lord Phillimore, etc. When told that they were of no importance whatever, he did not believe it. When assured that His Majesty's Government had no responsibility for them, and did not agree with them, he still thought that some Department of H.M.G. must be behind them. "Which of your Departments" Stalin asked, "is encouraging them"?'

Before Churchill's visit to Moscow, Blunt's old Cambridge friend who went with him to eat and plot at Tomas Harris's Mayfair home, Victor Rothschild, is publically stated to have 'approached Churchill in 1942 and advised the Prime Minister that the Soviets felt that de Courcy should be locked up under Section 18b. Moscow asserted that de Courcy's influence, which extended to the former King, the Duke of Windsor, was postponing the opening of a Second Front.'

On 23rd March 1984 Kenneth de Courcy wrote to me again, 'Pastor Fidler and Ruth Salwey I remember well. I also recall General Winsor.' After the liberation of Paris from Nazi occupation Miss Ruth Salwey soon got back to England and Kenneth de Courcy was there to meet her at Victoria Station. She came down to the Barry School of Evangelism to tell us about her wartime experiences and I encouraged her to write a book and Kenneth de Courcy not only published it but also wrote in his introduction to it, 'I have known the Salwey family for many years and I always associate them with France...She was kindness itself to me whenever I was in Paris.' I went to 11 Eaton Place, the de Courcy town house, to collect my signed copy of **Twenty-seven Steps of Humiliation**, an account of Ruth's bitter time as a prisoner of the Nazis. I was aware that the publisher had lent Ruth a considerable sum of money to buy a home in England while Dil de Rohan returned to Paris and used Ruth's flat there for much of the time. The liberation of Paris, however, did not end Stalin's worry about the anti-Soviet propaganda still appearing in **Intelligence Digest**, and this was because the Russians did not know who was feeding information to editor Kenneth de Courcy.

1963 not only saw Stephen Ward become a victim of British hypocrisy but an even longer case at the Old Bailey with press headlines when Kenneth de Courcy was sentenced to 7 years in prison for fraud, forgery and perjury. I had never before encountered such conceit and total lack of understanding over somebody's plight as Blunt's smug satisfaction with the fact that at long

last Kenneth de Courcy would be behind bars for a long stretch. Mr Justice Sachs said in open court, '...that because of severe criticisms made of those concerned in de Courcy's Old Bailey trial, the court would still give a decision on his appeal against conviction.' In 1964 de Courcy went with two prison officers to see his lawyers at an office near Great James Street, and jumping through a window went on the run. He turned for help to Ruth Salwey at the house he had helped her buy and whose books he had published.

Ruth consulted her vicar who led the police to de Courcy's hideout. Back in Wormwood Scrubs, Kenneth became friendly with George Blake, who spied for Russia and got 42 years, unlike Anthony Blunt who did the same and got nothing except a knighthood and immunity on condition he kept up supplies of information to his old bosses in MI5. These matters surfaced again in 1991 when two men who helped George Blake escape to Russia went on trial after writing a book about it. There was by then a large volume in court about the relationship between de Courcy, Robin Maugham and me. Blunt was dead by then, but not the Cabinet Ministers I consulted about my 1963 affairs when my witnesses were old friends of Arthur Waley. Kenneth de Courcy complained, and I believe justifiably, that he could not put up a proper defence because important documents had been stolen from his office. The 1991 theft of his ex-friend Robin Maugham's diaries certainly did not surprise me.

On 20 February 1965 Dil wrote to me from Spain, 'Robin, dear dear Robin, My heart is full of pity for Mary Oliver. Now she faces her operation in the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital, where normally we would all have been near and handy for daily visits like last year. It will be a great relief for me to know she is being looked after. She is in a very unstable condition, as Alice Toklas would say, "Sweet but incoherent." As both my mother and Katusha had died at my age exactly, I also had a secret hope I'd escape the whole nightmare of moving...God bless you, Dil.' By the time Dil reached London Mary Oliver had to come up from her home in Canterbury for the operation at the women's hospital around the corner from my home. Dil took her little green van by Russell Square to get books for Mary from Miss Dillon's bookshop and when passing Fabers nearly collided with Morley Kennerley in the prestigious Bentley given to him as a present by Barbara Hutton.

The poignancy seemed particularly bitter to Dil. How things had changed. As mistress of Pembroke Lodge in 1930 Mary Oliver had been able to put at Paul Bowles's disposal 'a car, chauffeur and footman.' And Mary's lavish entertainment could, and often did, upstage that of Bowles's neighbour in Tangier, Barbara Hutton and her friend/brother, Morley Kennerley. I was not happy that these two old friends, Dil and Mary, engineered the permanent

break between Morley and Barbara Hutton. Just as Arthur Waley spared Alison from worry over the Great James Street robbery, so I believe Morley hid from his wife Jean the reasons why Dil and Mary despised him - because he was a faithful husband with a daughter and job who would not risk his family's well-being by attempting the impossible rescue of Barbara from drink and drugs. But making mischief for mischief's sake also acted as a drug to Mary and Dil.

Once a week I went to pub reunions of the Guinea Pig Club founded by men who had been blinded and/or severely burnt in the Second World War, such as my friend Jimmy Wright who defied his disability and returned to making films at Shepperton. One night I asked Eileen Brooksbank, the Personal Assistant to Richard de la Mare, the Faber chairman, to take Jimmy to the tube station so that he could get his train from Waterloo to Shepperton. Instead she kindly drove him all the way to Shepperton. A few days later, as thanks, I gave Eileen an old Chinese robe which the Duchess of Newcastle had used as a dressing-gown.

One of the most written-up postwar auctions of Oriental furniture and art works took place at Richard de la Mare's home, Much Hadden Hall, but he also kept some fine pieces in his Faber office where apart from being chairman he engaged authors on Eastern art. While I was explaining the Chinese robe to Dick de la Mare, a secretary brought me recent press cuttings which included a photograph of my living-room with a carved and gilded Chinese mandarin on top of three elaborately-painted Chinese trousseau boxes inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Before the end of 1965, Dick would see them for himself for he had arranged to transport my things the short distance from Guilford Street for Fabers to store in Russell Square. The Chinese figures and boxes fascinated him and he laughingly said he hoped my things would be safer at Fabers than Arthur Waley's collection had been at 22 Great James Street.

Four years later Fabers themselves were leaving Russell Square for a new building nearer Great James Street and Eileen Brooksbank had already removed my large Madonna and Child to her home, and another editor my writing desk. I was using de la Mare's ground floor office to bring things up from the back warehouse, and finding some underpants damp I put them on top of Dick's Chinese vases to dry in the sun. Someone came in and instead of being shocked at my being undressed, demanded to know if I realised that my Y-fronts were on top of 'priceless vases.' In snatching the offending garments away two vases got damaged and so began the myth that I was a wild Irishman who went berserk and smashed up the priceless Chinese collection. People still remembered the night of the Faber cocktail party when Elizabeth Smart and I got drunk and I was rushed off to University College Hospital

with a damaged skull. In fact, only £50 of damage was done to the vases and, being a gentleman, de la Mare pressed no charges and arranged his own transport to take my remaining chattels to Strand-on-the-Green House before they moved from Russell Square.

Morley Kennerley was the Faber director who knew the Barbara Hutton/Dil de Rohan background. Around 1930 Morley started sending Barbara books by women poets and Barbara, knowing that money could achieve the seemingly impossible, soon became a published poetess herself. Morley stated, 'since I was with Faber and Faber, it was not difficult to arrange for a small edition to be produced,' and dedicated to the publisher/brother, Morley Kennerley. But Barbara also had a fascination with her co-Woolworth heir, cousin Jimmy Donahue. Their stay in Rome's Grand Hotel coincided with Mussolini's storming of the Palazzo Doria, and although Barbara had turned down the proposal of marriage from Prince Doria's nephew, Count Manolo Borromeo, the Doria titles and palaces so beguiled the Americans that they showed solidarity with Prince Doria's support for Ethiopia. Jimmy threw a large flower-pot from his balcony at the Grand Hotel onto the crowds below and shouted 'Viva Ethiopia! Long live Haile Selassie!' then started to pee over them when they threatened to storm the Grand Hotel and get him. The result of the uproar was a police order for him to leave Italy within 24 hours.

As he noted in *Blind Victory*, Lonsdale Bryans also liked staying at the Grand Hotel in Rome, with or without his American friend Jimmy Donahue who, however, was certainly not there when Lonsdale turned up in Rome on his mission sponsored by Foreign Secretary Halifax, because Jimmy was in a Milan jail, the city where Lonsdale's publisher had his headquarters, then in the process of bringing out an Italian edition of his book on anthropological sociology. In the grand manner as he did everything, Lonsdale wrote, 'Now that there was no difficulty with Treasury restrictions as to having funds sent out from England, on arrival in Rome I engaged a room at the Grand Hotel. Once installed there, I rang up the Embassy and made an appointment to see Sir Percy Loraine that evening at six o'clock...six o'clock found me at the Embassy, where I was shown into the ambassador's private sanctum. He came in a few minutes later and, rightly or wrongly, I received the impression of being in the presence of the *fonctionnaire* atmosphere. His antagonism was indeed not unnatural, in view of the cavalier fashion in which his letter to Lord Perth had been treated, when he had attempted to prevent my travelling to Rome in the preceding autumn.'

Lonsdale had first come to Rome with Evan Tredegar, his fellow Etonian whose involuntary exodus from that school served as a prelude to his later exit in the same manner and for the same reasons from the English

College in Rome, that is, thrown out, on the first occasion by the headmaster and on the second by the director. Now in 1940, Lonsdale reappeared in Rome and asked the British Ambassador to arrange 'an audience with the Duce - my aims as then being merely to replace Hitler, which would have suited Mussolini' as he wrote. But the ambassador's suspicions were aroused by Lonsdale's lunching at the Grand Hotel with Francis Rose's godfather, ex-King Alfonso of Spain, and by consorting at night with Evan's friends in the Vatican.

The British Ambassador, the 12th Loraine Baronet of Kirkharle, also of Eton and Oxford, used his sniffer-dog instinct to pick up gossip he was obliged to pass on to the Foreign office. He had been attached to Lloyd George at the 1919 Peace Conference in Paris when the Prime Minister's secretary and future countess, Frances Stevenson, had her last meeting with Evan Tredegar which was certainly not as smooth an encounter as Frances made out in her 1967 autobiography. In *Blind Victory* Lonsdale Bryans wrote that 'Sir Percy Loraine's information was badly at fault - or that he wished to put me off for some diplomatic reason.' The ambassador knew that only an untrained diplomat would talk about, and later publish, that he 'merely' wanted to replace Hitler.

Sir Percy was perfectly aware that the FBI agents watched like hawks the airs and graces of Lonsdale and King Alfonso whose drinking at the American Bar of the Grand Hotel had many purposes not least the fate of their friend Jimmy Donahue in his Milan prison. Under the Freedom of Information Act, hundreds of FBI documents have been released about Barbara Hutton, including this from Rome, 'DONAHUE released on new Year's Day as favor to King upon payment by BARBARA HUTTON of a seventeen thousand dollar fine.'

In the 1930s Elsa Maxwell had shared her Beverley Hills home with Evalyn Walsh McLean who owned the Hope Diamond, and they threw one of their most-written-about parties for Richard Gulley, a cousin of Anthony Eden and close friend of Evan Tredegar and Lonsdale Bryans. Jean and Morley Kennerley loved Elsa Maxwell's parties but disapproved when the FBI director, Edgar Hoover, started a hate campaign against Barbara Hutton and Jimmy Donahue. Morley's role of 'brother' embroiled him with impecunious fortune-hunters who lured Barbara to bed solely for the size of her fortune. But the Woolworth heiress was interested in the size of something else, on offer from the Dominican playboy stud called Porfirio Rubirosa.

David Heymann writes, 'Rubirosa's prodigal dimensions were so widely and casually discussed that it became usual when ordering freshly ground pepper in the finest European restaurants to ask the waiter for the "Rubirosa." The comparison of Rubirosa's natural equipment to a sixteen-

inch carved pepper mill helps explain why he had women on several continents clamoring for his attention. His chorus line of conquests included names no less recognizable than Zsa Zsa Gabor, Dolores Del Rio, Joan Crawford, Veronica Lake, Jayne Mansfield, Marilyn Monroe, Susan Hayward, Tina Onassis and Evita Peron. It is however in Alice-Leone Moat's book, *The Million Dollar Studs* that all, or at least some, of what the butler saw is revealed.

Born in Paris as the son of the Dominican Ambassador there, Porfirio Rubirosa became known as 'Toujours pret' - Always Ready. In the Spanish Civil War Peter Churchill met Rubi and suspected him of bartering his renowned stud qualities for works of art and jewels, although Rubi's brother Cesar Rubirosa explained, 'He got rich selling visas to the Jews, but didn't everyone?' That 'everyone' certainly included Dil de Rohan via her Swiss dealings at the Ministry of Information, and it was her old friend Lonsdale Bryans who knew which end of the market Dil operated, namely, anything from £100 to £1,000 per passport, on top of stealing the wedding rings and jewelry given by Mrs Wills and her Barry neighbours for Jews to have free passports. Before an 18-year old French student became Rubi's 5th wife, Barbara Hutton had met the homosexual tennis ace, Baron Gottfried von Cramm whom Lonsdale Bryans had known in pre-war Germany. Lonsdale relied on von Cramm's connections with diplomats in Switzerland to get passports for escaping Jews.

In 1940, while King Alfonso and Lonsdale lunched at Rome's Grand Hotel, in Washington the FBI chief, Edgar Hoover, gloated over this report, 'The Bureau is aware of the fact that over the past six months BARBARA HUTTON has made several trips to Mexico City, staying at the Hotel Reforma. According to information developed by SIS (Secret Intelligence Service), subject has placed a number of radio-telephone calls from Mexico City to BARON VON CRAMM in Germany, VON CRAMM, a former Davis Cup tennis player and a close friend of the subject, was previously imprisoned in Germany for alleged homosexual acts. Information developed through censorship reveals that HUTTON was instrumental in gaining release of VON CRAMM through DR H FLEIRSCHBROTH, a cousin of VON CRAMM and a German diplomat stationed in Switzerland until last year. VON CRAMM now in German army. Information obtained by SIS is that HUTTON vacations in Mexico but now living in Beverly Hills and associates considerably with CARY GRANT and RICHARD GULLEY, a cousin of ANTHONY EDEN. Bureau could look into possibility of using VON CRAMM connection to discredit subject in press.

When Lord Halifax declined to become Prime Minister and went instead as British Ambassador to Washington, Anthony Eden became Foreign

Secretary and he, aware that other connections could be used to discredit him, withdrew sponsorship from the Lonsdale Bryans peace mission. Lord Halifax had been impressed not only with Lonsdale's church connections with his own family, but why the powerful Wednesday Society in Berlin had chosen Lonsdale to represent it.

Lonsdale Bryans had spent three months of 1928 with his cousin, Count zu Munster von Derneburg at the medieval Schloss Derneburg in the Harz Mountains. During this pre-Nazi period many eminent Germans stayed at the castle, in particular the President of Germany's nephew, Baron Herbert von Hindenburg whose Scottish wife was a niece of the late Princess Munster, a relation of Lonsdale Bryans on his mother's side. During the First World War Baron Hindenburg had been Charge d'Affaires in Switzerland and by 1928 had already retired as German Ambassador in Rome, but kept up his close ties with Prince Doria and Adeline de la Feld. By 1940 several of Lonsdale's friends or cousins from Schloss Derneburg in the 1920s were also experienced enough to appreciate the old order in Germany before Hitler, and as they too were diplomats in Italy and Switzerland the Wednesday Society saw Lonsdale as the natural peace envoy to the British Foreign Office.

Because Winston Churchill and Brendan Bracken did not want a peace settlement, Lonsdale Bryans got nowhere with his mission, for the new Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, knew the FBI chief, Edgar Hoover, took delight in seeing his name and that of Eden's cousin, Richard Gulley, in the Secret Intelligence Service report on the homosexual network that surrounded Barbara Hutton and Jimmy Donahue. Eden knew all about the homosexual goings-on in Berlin which attracted other well-known Eton and Oxford gays who followed Lonsdale Bryans and Evan Tredegar to German gay clubs. One such was Eddie Sackville who wrote letters to Raymond Mortimer expressing Eddie's rapture at being led through the streets on a dog chain by his German lover. And after Hitler and his Nazis replaced President Paul von Hindenburg's government, many more English homosexuals flocked to Berlin to grace the parties given by Ernst Röhm and Francis Rose.

When Winston Churchill became Prime Minister he did not forget how dangerous Evan Tredegar and his Jesuit confessor, Father Martindale, could be with their influence at the Vatican which had even brought about the annulment of the Duke of Marlborough's marriage. It surprised neither Churchill nor Brendan Bracken to learn of Lonsdale Bryans's reappearance at the Vatican in 1940. An Italian custom permitted the King and Queen of Italy to celebrate the New Year by the release of twenty prisoners, one of them being Jimmy Donahue at the Queen's request and after Barbara Hutton's payment of the huge fine.

The Queen's confessor was the Jesuit, Father Tacchi-Venturi, who

wielded such power that he had been the architect of the Lateran Treaty which made the Pope sovereign of the 108 acres of Vatican City. The ordinary Italian Catholic saw the treaty as Mussolini's wisest move on the domestic front. Furthermore, it was Father Tacchi-Venturi who regularised the Duce's marriage and who had much influence in political matters both with Mussolini and the Popes. In the tradition of medieval monks, the tiny Jesuit always stood as he illuminated missals, which delighted the artist, Lonsdale Bryans, who soon received the following bilingual card, 'Dear Mister, L'Emo Cardinale Segretario di Stato di Sua Santita vi ricevera volentieri in Vaticano martedì della veniente settimana 12 Dicembre alle ore 12. Yours very truly, Pietro Tacchi-Venturi, S.J.' Naturally, Lonsdale was on time for the Swiss Guard to conduct him through the various courtyards to the Cardinal Secretary of State.

Lonsdale was writing *Blind Victory* in 1949 about all these adventures when that master of Vatican ceremonies, Evan Tredegar died and his Jesuit confessor, Father Martindale, conducted the principal mass for Evan's soul which had found rest in good works that were so recognised by the once-despised Labour government that Prime Minister Attlee sent a representative to Farm Street Church. My own plans for marrying Diana Pelham went a stage further with our engagement and the idea of starting life with her at the Rodneys' farm in Canada, plans of which Lonsdale Bryans much approved. People such as his possessive schoolfriend, Evan Tredegar, made George Rodney so determined to escape that the Rodneys' own new life meant living in a tent through a -30 degree F winter. Lonsdale Bryans thought it ironic that my new life would start with the Rodneys, and even more ironic when the new life continued at Shownigan Lake School, the 1913 product of yet another new life, that of his cousin, Christopher Lonsdale.

Golden years, it seemed, stretched ahead for Diana and me at Shownigan Lake - Eton of Canada. However, Guy Burgess had other ideas. Guy's malice against me was no more than the sort of thing Adeline de la Feld expected from that quarter. After all, Burgess was almost a 'rotten one' himself like the despised Brian Howard. Burgess, of course, had been among the first to enjoy the gay clubs in Vienna and Berlin to which Lonsdale Bryans introduced him while the Venerable J H Sharp signed the cheques. Apart from his salary as a member of the Church of England's Foreign Relations Council Archdeacon Sharp had a considerable income from the family's Dundee estate which included jute-mills. He always kept a very sharp eye indeed on the family's ties in Germany, and especially on Princess Munster, a Scottish lady with a Scottish niece married to Baron Herbert von Hindenburg, nephew of the then President of Germany.

Meanwhile lording it at Schloss Derneburg was the princess's own relation, Lonsdale Bryans, who did not mind obliging the archdeacon with

some prime blond German boys, but refused to take part in the Left-wing schemes of his fellow-Etonian, Guy Burgess. Lonsdale's task was to get rid of Hitler and make Britain an ally of a strong Germany to fight 'the wicked Commies.'

Washington DC in the form of the FBI kept up its surveillance of high-life Americans such as Morley and Jean Kennerley who accompanied Barbara Hutton and Jimmy Donahue on their wildest sprees. Adeline de la Feld had been displeased when her niece Bridget Parsons joined the rich American Chips Channon's set at Buckingham Street. Daphne Fielding wrote that the girls 'were cultivated for their social graces' and Chips would even marry one, Lady Honor Guinness, although to the end he remained faithful to his live-in boyfriend, Peter Coats. Adeline did not disapprove of the sprees as such, which Chips and Barbara Hutton gave, but of the gross disparity between the treatment meted out to the likes of Jimmy Donahue and the injustice inflicted on Vivien, the wife of that other Faber director, T S Eliot.

Vivien Eliot was no longer asked for her satirical sketches of society hostesses for *Criterion* magazine, and in desperation she pushed parcels of excreta through the publisher Faber's letter-box. Jimmy Donahue could undo his trousers and pee on the crowd below his Grand Hotel balcony in Rome, and he could even cut off an American's penis in new York without charges being brought, his bravura even causing some amusement. But this connivance and sense of humour did not apply to Mrs Eliot. She had to be stopped. They had her certified insane. Adeline was in a good position to judge the inequity between the Kennerleys' exploitation of the Woolworth heirs and the plight of the wretched Vivien Eliot. Adeline, as the keeper of the Newcastle purse in relation to institutions of the Anglican High Church, had a unique opportunity to find out from the clergy, such as her friends at Kelham, what had made T S Eliot such an unhappy man for so many years. She was convinced the break-up of his marriage drove Eliot to despair.

By 1972 Morley Kennerley had retired from Fabers and George Kinnaird from John Murray but both publishers met occasionally. In my last letter to Morley I wrote, 'I have pleasant memories of you and indeed only yesterday talked with an old friend who walked with you and me and Jean along the Brighton cliffs watching the new marina being built there. I am simply writing this letter to clear up certain points put to me by biographers as well as by the Inland Revenue which is closely examining the finances of my Faber commissioned books you sanctioned.'

George Kinnaird lived for part of the year with The Gorilla in Tangier where Kennerley's friend/sister Barbara Hutton had her Moorish palace and a stream of the bodily well-endowed to share her bed. The public record shows that it was Morley rather than Jimmy Donahue who accompanied

Barbara when millions of dollars were settled on people like Porfirio Rubirosa who had his underpants specially tailored by Hilditch & Key of London in an ultra-thin cotton, as disclosed to the international press.

When the Kennerleys met up with the weird Kinnaird household in 1972, Peter Churchill's *All My Sins Remembered* had already come out and we all admired Peter's frankness, especially about life in Morocco. But Morley felt apprehensive about the sort of revelations Peter might make in his next book which I was researching with the help of staff at Windsor Castle. On 10 February 1972 Sir Robert Mackworth-Young, the Windsor Castle Librarian wrote, 'Dear Lord Churchill, You may most certainly have copies of the photographs for which you ask...I regret that there is none of the Investiture of King Haakon. Nor can any be found of your father grown up. But we have found a portrait drawing by Byam Shaw...'

In the event, the Byam Shaw portraits which eventually appeared as illustrations in a book were those of Anthony Blunt's brothers, aunt and uncle, for the Byam Shaw connection particularly appealed to the Russian spy who knew that when Peter Churchill stayed with me the artist's son Glen, and his wife Angela Baddeley, came to visit Peter. But the picture Peter painted of himself in his book at the time he was Chief Page of Honour to King Edward VII differs vastly from Wilfrid Blunt's written self-portrait in his autobiography, a 'picture of myself and my brother Christopher, painted in 1906 by John Byam Shaw. Dressed in purple velvet with a lace collar, and looking horribly like Little Lord Fauntleroy.'

Peter describes himself around 1906, 'I was always happy in North Africa, as my mother was when we were able to get away there, and it was there that my sex education was accomplished. I had learned to speak Arabic from the Moorish children I played with, and at one point the street of the Ouled Nail turned out to be an unexpected gold mine for a kid who was blond and looked Anglo-Saxon. It was through trying to supplement my pocket-money that I became the best tout in the Street of the Dancing Girls. I inspired immediate confidence, I could remember, in prospective customers, tourists mostly, who seldom had any idea of where I was leading them. I never bargained with the tourists as some of the boys did; I took what they gave me and left them to their fate, coming back later to collect my commission...Sailors on shore-leave were my most profitable customers, and I liked them best. I was willing to look after them and their money, provided they gave me some of it. In North Africa there was a lot more besides sex to be explored. The Street of the Dancing Girls was also the street of the thugs and the petty thieves and the kif smoker. Kif smoking technically was against the law but was almost respectable. The best people smoked.'

But Peter was not the only one we knew who boasted of boyhood in the

streets of Morocco with bells on his fingers and kohl on his eyes. In spite of having run to fat The Gorilla remained an impressive belly-dancer, like Ali Baba the third party in Lord Audley's honeymoon-a-trois with Sarah Churchill at George Kinnaird's Brighton house.

From the dramatic day in 1910 when the 19-year old Peter Churchill fled with his mother, sisters and the Churchill jewels to North Africa to escape the wrath of his father, the Lord Chamberlain, Morocco had become more like a first than a second home to Peter. But after serving in the First World War, Peter became an actor in New York and during a 1930 visit to London went to a party at his cousin, Lord Wimborne's house. He wrote, 'I ran across Augustus John who told me that a story was circulating in London that I had stolen Alice Wimborne's jewels. Augustus thought I should do something about it. I immediately telephoned to Ivor Wimborne to ask him what I should do. He told me not to worry and that the jewels had now been found. The story of me as a jewel thief, however, was to persist for a very long time. Later I encountered it more than once, the most recent time being more than thirty years after the night of that party. So much for one night's entertainment in my native land!'

Morley Kennerley's 1972 visit to Brighton very much concerned the \$5 million theft of Barbara Hutton's jewels which included Marie Antoinette's pearls. Jean Kennerley told David Heymann, 'People perpetually warned me that Barbara Hutton would try to take away my husband. I didn't believe it. Morley and Barbara were like brother and sister.' Barbara did not wait 40 years to discover that Morley lacked essential qualities such as those possessed by Porfirio Rubirosa. In 1972 Barbara was 60 years old when she started her affair with the 24 year old Spanish bull-fighter Angel Teruel.

By then Morley had become a bloated snob in bowler hat at the wheel of his latest large car, and certainly after so many years Barbara did not demand sex of him although being full of drink and drugs she might well, as Dil de Rohan claimed, have squeezed his testicles to make him reveal the whereabouts of the missing jewels. At any rate, she insisted that Morley explain to the insurance agent, Chubb & Son, what happened to the \$5 million missing jewels, some of which Morley had bought from the Henry Hope collection via Bridget Parsons. These had been private transactions. But there was only one public record linking diamonds and other stones from the Henry Hope estate with my name and with Fabers and that was Christie's 1967 sale of Adeline's jewels. But the Church Commissioners' evidence that they and not I had received every penny from that sale, was with the Customs and Excise and other bodies.

After explanations in Arabic by Peter Churchill and Spanish by George Balcombe, the reason for Morley's visit to Brighton at last dawned on The

Gorilla who thought the theft of Barbara Hutton's jewels a good joke, but not comic at all the fact that his old friend, Jimmy Donahue had cut off a sailor's penis without being prosecuted whereas The Gorilla had been sent to prison on many occasions merely for obliging masochists such as George Kinnaird with the beatings they craved. Wild applause greeted The Gorilla's belly-dancing at Barbara Hutton's palace and Peter Churchill's restaurant in Tangier.

I had been surprised in 1945 when Mrs Wills asked me to help with the 1000 invitations to her Golden Jubilee of the CAWG, but she rightly deemed that less than 200 would turn up for the high tea although many others, such as the 'saved' ones in the Kinnaird family, would send cheques which would more than cover the whole event. Cards with 'Mrs Barbara Woolworth Hutton requests the pleasure of your company' would be sent to 200 people, but in accordance with Moroccan custom they would bring friends so that over 1000 would arrive. Paul Bowles wrote in **Without Stopping**, 'One summer when she gave a ball she brought thirty Reguibat camel drivers with their racing camels from the Sahara, a good thirty miles distant, merely to form a **garde d'honneur** through which the guest would pass at the entrance of the house. The camels and men stayed encamped in the palace Sidi Hosni for many days after the party, apparently in no hurry to get back to the desert.' But Morley Kennerley was always anxious to get back to his office at Faber and Faber.

The year before I went to write my book on Morocco, Morley had sent the internal memo to Charles Monteith saying 'we certainly do not want to lose' me. Morley certainly did not want to lose Barbara Hutton for he recognised himself as her sheet-anchor in a very stormy life. For four years that other Faber director, Alan Pringle who edited **The Protege**, lived in Brighton very close to George Kinnaird, Peter Churchill and me, and although I introduced them, the happily married Alan was never invited to our homes because the others thought him dull. Alan once met Hermione Baddeley as she came out of the pub near his home, relying for support on the arm of her latest consort, a student. 'Don't you think he's gorgeous, Darlin'?' asked Hermione batting her false eyelashes at Alan who scurried indoors without waiting to hear The Gorilla's enthusiastic description of the student's sexual prowess.

Morley Kennerley, of course, would have reacted differently because he had been used to that sort of situation with Barbara Hutton ever since he became her 'brother' in the 1920s. Barbara's cousin and co-Woolworth heir, Jimmy Donahue, was more of a sister than a brother with his boasts of appearing in drag before Cardinal Spellman, and of saying to reporters, 'I'm sure you all saw and loved me in the chorus line of **Hot and Bothered**. It was a ten-day wonder, a royal flop. Flops run in the family. My old man knew all

about them. How many of you remember my old man?' The wonder of Jimmy's role in the affair with the Duchess of Windsor, played out before the international press, was that it lasted for over three years, before Jimmy returned to the boys. At the age of 18, Jimmy had been a dancer in the chorus of the musical comedy called **Hot and Bothered** but Peter Churchill outshone everyone, from his early days as an Eton schoolboy on holiday touting for sex in Morocco, to his later nights dancing as a Tiller Girl in New York.

Another tall British actor, Michael Rennie, appeared in America and at Palm Springs between marriages started an affair with Barbara who wrote at the time, 'I consider myself quite normal sexually. There are times when I like sex and times when I don't. When I'm in the mood for it, I like nothing better. But I don't enjoy cruelty. I hate it when somebody I think I know comes out wearing a rubber diving suit, with a bullwhip in one hand and a jar of vaseline in the other.'

Nobody understood Barbara better than Morley Kennerley, her 'brother', father confessor and, importantly for her, publisher. He noted, 'It was not great or even very good poetry, but some of it was quite moving - at least it moved me.' Barbara dedicated her poetry to the publisher for he understood, and felt moved by lines such as 'I had dreamt your love would be/ A simple lovely thing/ Unfraught by savage words/ That lead to suffering.'

Barbara was only five years old when her mother, born Edna Woolworth, on discovering her husband's affair with a young Swedish actress, took her best evening gown and jewels to a New York hotel and swallowed a fatal overdose. Through her seven marriages and numerous affairs with such people as Howard Hughes and James Dean, Barbara looked to Morley as her brother who understood how the 'savage words' could hurt as much as the bullwhip.

Jean Kennerley was right in claiming, 'People perpetually warned me that Barbara Hutton would try to take away my husband,' and those warning people had included Bridget Parsons and Dil de Rohan, although their view of Barbara's relationship with Morley differed from Jean's. At her death in 1979, Barbara's inherited estate should have been in excess of \$750 million, instead of which she had just \$3,500. Morley was a businessman, a director of Faber and Faber who authorised my contracts, and whose looks might have corresponded to some people's description of him as a bloodhound in a bowler-hat. Yet this guard-dog quality was exactly what scared-off many if not all the fortune-hunters and sycophants circling around Barbara Hutton, while she drew much-needed self-confidence from it. Cursed by her fortune, the heiress had been early warned by more than Noel Coward's 1920s 'Poor little rich girl,/ You're a bewitched girl,/ Better beware!'

Morley and I knew many people surrounding both Barbara Hutton and Bridget Parsons from the 1930s, and passages in my book *Fanfare for Brazil* much amused him, such as 'we would perhaps only break off when a city guide brought distinguished visitors to meet Oscar (Niemeyer). One afternoon a small, pale American came in who, within five minutes, had told us of his forty-five roomed Manhattan mansion (dining-room and seven other rooms transported floorboard by floorboard from an English castle) and his vast collection of Picassos, Arps, Henry Moores, and Brancusis, his plans to establish a nine-acre garden of sculpture, laid out by the Japanese Isamu Noguchi, in Jerusalem for Israel's National Museum, and his intention to attend the Eichmann trial which was then current news. He was in Brasilia to meet "the great Oscar", whose work he knew from New York. I had never met anybody before who just picked up stuff as he went along - Rodins, Bourselles, Maillols, Daumiers. Not only did he possess all these, but also the original of Epstein's *Visitation*, of which, he maintained the Tate Gallery had a mere copy. He paused and, being in ignorance, I inquired what his name might be. "You'll remember it," he said. "Billy Rose." I would certainly never forget it. His visit was rather like a Press interview, and indeed a few days later Brazil's newspapers did bear reports of his visit to the city and of his nineteen Henry Moores, the Grinling Gibbons fireplace and the forty-five rooms. The papers also added that Mr "Showman" Rose had been two days in the company of Oscar Niemeyer. It was a quick two days, even for show business.'

Ironically, in 1931 the Kennerleys had seen much of Barbara when Bing Crosby made his record of 'I Found a Million-Dollar Baby (in a Five and Ten Cent Store)' by Billy Rose who would die leaving a fortune compared with the Five and Ten Cent Store heiress, Barbara Woolworth Hutton. Many of Barbara's friends frequently changed their spouses, but Morley and Jean's marriage outlived the lot which made Barbara rely even more on Morley, with whom I also got on well.

Barbara shared Billy Rose's propensity for talking about her possessions and if, for example, a listener admired a ring, Barbara would slip it off and give it as a present, even to a restaurant waitress. These spontaneous gifts made it impossible for a busy London publisher like Morley Kennerley to keep track of what Barbara gave away, claimed was lost, or what was stolen. And there was also the embarrassment over drugs. Peter Churchill never gave up the drug habit acquired while a schoolboy touting for sex in the Street of the Dancing Girls. But he lived to be 83. It certainly would never have done for Customs and Excise to have seen the contents of Peter's luggage coming from Tangier in the 1960s more than fifty years after he packed the Churchill historic jewels when he escaped to North Africa with his mother and sisters.

For just as Customs and Excise wrote to me care of Faber and Faber after the sale of Adeline's Hope diamonds, so Peter always used my address, whether for letters from Windsor Castle or from Lewes Prison where the former dancing boy poured out his heart in Arabic, knowing that among us all only Peter could read it. Hermione Baddeley certainly never invited Jean or Morley Kennerley to The Gorilla's Coming Out Party.

Not All Their Secrets

After Queen Victoria died in 1901 the same old Marlborough House set could be seen at the races with the new King Edward VII, and so could the favourite American heiresses, Consuela and Natica Yznaga del Valle, the New York sisters depicted in elaborate, fashionable engravings of Ascot as the Duchess of Manchester and Lady Lister-Kaye, the latter's husband, Sir John, being the royal Groom-in-Waiting, until his creditors got tired of waiting for Sir John and he raced away to Canada. Only Natica Lister-Kaye survived to see her great-niece, Lady Bridget Parsons, dancing in the arms of Edward VII's grandson, Prince George of Kent, at the ballroom of that other American, Lady Cunard, born Maud Burke of California.

Sir Thomas Beecham took the rostrum at Covent Garden while his lover, Lady Cunard, took in Bridget Parsons and any stray princesses who failed to squeeze into Evan Tredegar's box with Puccini or other composers. The viscounts were important, Evan Tredegar of course, and also Garrett Moore who would not only succeed Evan's protege, Brendan Bracken, as head of the financial press, but also succeeded as the Earl of Drogheda and as such became chairman of Evan's beloved Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

Wealth and music united, and at times divided, this set which found its trans-Atlantic links useful in the Second World War when Barbara Hutton, for example, sent many pressing telegrams urging that the wives and children of Morley Kennerley and Viscount Moore should flee to her for safety in California as her guests, which they duly did. But it was not only underpaid shop-girls from Woolworth Stores who showed contempt for the heiress as they paraded with banners 'Babs renounces citizenship but no Profits.' Lord Moore's son Derry, who became a professional photographer in London, as a four-year old boy looked at Barbara who had brought him from the London bombing to sunny California, and declared, 'I hate you,' whereupon Barbara replied, 'I hate you too.'

After the sale of Adeline de la Feld's jewels at Christie's, there remained questions about a number of oddments such as stones missing from jewels sold earlier to Barbara Hutton. Garrett Moore had now become Earl of Drogheda and a striking figure as he led the Queen Mother and Sir Anthony Blunt into the royal box at Covent Garden. His countess and son Derry kept up with Barbara even though the Kennerleys had dropped seeing their once intimate and dependent friend. Christie's cheque mistakenly made payable to

Faber and Faber in 1967 had astonished Morley and it alarmed him to think that in her drug-confusion Barbara was imagining Adeline's jewels to be hers.

To try and sort this out I visited Barbara in her suite at Claridge's. Derry Moore and his mother also went the same week and he left this description, 'She was very odd by now. In bed she wore all her pearls at once. She retreated into a strange fantasy world, the result of being completely isolated from normal human contact. She talked incessantly of suicide, and yet she was terrified of death. She wore this very tiny silver whistle around her neck and whenever she wanted her nurse or another member of the staff, she would blow the whistle. The nurse would try to feed her, but she wouldn't take the food. She would chew it and then spit it out, sometimes at the nurse.'

Peter Churchill came with me because of his special knowledge about the Marie Antoinette possessions owned by his mother's Lowther side, and also about the Churchill heirlooms which had paid their escape to North Africa in 1910. Barbara had read about all these jewel exploits in Peter's autobiography in which he also admitted, 'The story of me as a jewel thief, however, was to persist for a very long time.' The Marie Antoinette pearls certainly appeared among those Barbara wore in bed at Claridge's less than three years before Barbara's insurance agent, Chubb & Son, refused to settle a claim unless she sued the Italian nobleman with whom she thought she had left the \$5 million box of jewels.

Like an ornithologist, Rupert Croft-Cooke did years of Barbara Hutton-watching when they both lived in Tangier and he used the material in his book **The Caves of Hercules**, which was read for potential libel by more than Morley Kennerley. But Croft-Cooke had sufficient cunning to wait until George Kinnaird and Peter Churchill died before sending them up in print. The novelist Jeremy Brooks had reviewed several of my books in **The Observer** and on 19 March 1961 wrote that Croft-Cooke and I were 'engaged in writing autobiographical sequences, which are running almost exactly parallel courses. Each has written one book about early childhood, a second about middle boyhood, and now a third in which the young Robert and the young Rupert, still tingling with possibilities are each left poised on the edge of a self-chosen way of life. Typically, the Belfast brat reached this point at an earlier age than the public schoolboy.'

I had not met Rupert Croft-Cooke by March 1961. His literary career began in poetry 'until T S Eliot and his followers swept away all the little Neo-Georgians like me,' as Rupert reported in **The Green, Green Grass, Being the twenty-fourth and final book in the sequence The Sensual World**. T S Eliot did not think Croft-Cooke's poetry good enough for Fabers though he never forgot that it was Morley Kennerley who published Barbara Hutton's verse because it 'moved' him. As a girl of 13, Barbara herself had been so

moved by the plight of the poor that she wrote, 'Why should some have all/ And others be without./ Why should men pretend/ And Women have to doubt.'

In view of the way Barbara handed over her money and jewels to servants as well as to lovers nobody should have been amazed that so little remained at her death. Barbara would wear a beautiful Paris gown designed by Dil de Rohan perhaps once and then send it with a dozen others to Jean Kennerley and Morley objected to this no more than the camel-drivers and parlour-maids rejected their food parcels. Jean Kennerley stated about the French-designer dresses, 'People told me not to take them, that she ought to buy her close friends only new clothes. I didn't see any reason not to take them, so I did. Barbara was always giving somebody something and people became very touchy about it.' However Morley hated, but could not stop, Barbara's reckless signing over of millions of dollars from her Woolworth capital to professional studs such as Porfirio Rubirosa, simply because of a large penis. Indeed, Rubi collected his divorce settlement after only 53 days of marriage to Barbara.

Croft-Cooke, however, vented his rage on other publishers as well as Fabers. He wrote how after a libel threat Hutchinson withdrew what promised to be a best-selling novel *Cosmopolis* about a Swiss hotel where Adeline de la Feld and her political friend Jamie stayed. This withdrawal spawned Croft-Cooke's vendetta against 'Walter Hutchinson, over the doors of whose offices during his life time should have been a sign "Abandon Hope All Ye Who Enter Here."' (He lived up to this himself a few years later, committing suicide just after the Second World War.) Adeline knew Walter Hutchinson particularly well because he had published many of her friends' work including Almeric Fitzroy's *Memoirs* which referred to Adeline's early lectures on Futurism and new ideas in art and poetry such as that written by the young American clerk at her bank, T S Eliot.

The clerk's English wife, Vivien Eliot, hated her husband going to see Nancy Cunard dancing with 'The Little Prince', David, Prince of Wales, after which the poet had secret suppers with Nancy. The two American directors at Faber and Faber had common interests outside the boardroom and their pranks such as letting off fireworks on 4 July to frighten their chairman, Geoffrey Faber. I wrote to Morley Kennerley when the Customs and Excise were investigating the sale of Adeline de la Feld's Hope diamonds, 'It was Thomas Hope who smuggled many of the jewels from the French Royal Family into England. Christie's catalogue shows that these jewels sold via me came from the Hope collection. Thomas Hope's son, the Rt Hon Alexander Beresford-Hope and his brother-in-law, Prime Minister Lord Salisbury, were the forerunners of the High Church movement which your friend and fellow

American, T S Eliot spent so much of his life championing. But there is no record of you going with Eliot to the Hope family institutions at Canterbury, Kelham or Clumber. On the other hand there is much evidence, published and unpublished, that you did know the Hope descendants such as Count Manole Borromeo, with whom you and Jean travelled in Barbara Hutton's private train during the early 1930s...In *The Protege* I tell of my long friendship with Sir Otto Mundy, the Deputy Chairman of Customs and Excise, who often had to keep Queen Mary in control. But in 1949 both Queen Mary and Sir Otto appeared to be of one mind when, upon my departure for Canada, Hope diamonds rather than cash were used to finance certain among the "true" princes who you doubtless met with Barbara Hutton...I advised the Duke of Windsor to get his wife away from New York and Jimmy Donahue and to settle his Canadian affairs at the ranch in Alberta since there were too many huge breaches of the currency restrictions that would get us all into trouble. Instead of going to his ranch in Alberta, the Duke of Windsor went to Paris while Guy Burgess came to the British Embassy in Washington full of his bluster about the Churchills and the British Royal Family's involvement with the "real" prince so favoured by both Hitler and the Duke of Kent...'

After members of the royal family and the famous hostess, Kathleen Duchess of Newcastle, left Clumber for the last time before the demolition machines moved in, the only familiar faces to return there regularly were monks from the Sacred Mission at Kelham who continued to celebrate mass in the splendid chapel where Adeline had married in 1920 and which, being separate from the mansion, remained intact. These monks were friends of TS Eliot who for years continued his regular retreats at Kelham when he wearied on the one hand of being the Greatest Living Poet and on the other the guilt-ridden husband of the certified Vivien.

In order to keep my borrowing on Fabers' commissioned books as low as possible, I tried to get BBC work about those countries the publishers suggested for books. I often saw Christopher Sykes when I went to collect my recording equipment at Broadcasting House. Some of the stories about the now dead T S Eliot's private life upset Christopher as they also did Adeline. 'Tremendous care over accuracy in detail' characterised my books as Charles Monteith wrote and nobody ever challenged the facts in any of my 17 Faber books. Not that I evaded controversial issues of the countries I wrote about, not even those of Northern Ireland where many politicians knew both Charles Monteith and me.

I strongly objected, for example, to the claims made in print by Le Corbusier that he had designed certain buildings in Brazil and New York and had my BBC tape recorder at hand before Fabers published this in my book *Fanfare For Brazil*, 'Limelight which should be Niemeyer's has often fallen

on Le Corbusier. Later I spent some days with Sir Howard Robertson in Brasilia. He had been the architect representing Britain at the designing of the New York United Nations' building. He realised how powerfully Niemeyer's suggestions lie behind this famous group of buildings.'

Christopher Sykes and I quickly realised what rubbish lay behind suggestions made by some people about the years T S Eliot spent sharing a flat with the disagreeable John Hayward. Had Eliot escaped from the dreary round of looking-after the discontented Hayward in order to see some favourite young monk at Kelham and take him to Evensong at Clumber Chapel, Adeline would certainly not have been outraged. She had seen too many gay clergy come to visit her Uncle Newcastle at Clumber. But Adeline was upset on hearing my taped conversation with an author whom I met with Evan Tredegar and who wanted my help on a biography of Lord Alfred Douglas.

After the sale of her diamonds, Adeline wrote to me that the sale was 'an end, a final parting,' but when she heard how the cheque had been mistakenly made out to Faber and Faber and that the whole matter went into Mr Justice Swanwick's court, she seemed almost pleased because it illustrated the many years of bitter litigation within her Hope family over rights to the diamonds. Nevertheless, she regretted that such a foolish mistake by Christie's should sour my excellent relationship with Charles Monteith who had absolutely no part in the affair. After all, Monteith had been the Faber director photographed with me in front of the T S Eliot bust at the 1964 press interview when he told how he had commissioned me to write a book on Morocco.

Charles Monteith and other Faber staff had met some of Adeline's and Eliot's friends at my home, the only priest who turned up in clerical garb being Mgr Hugh Montgomery. Wyn Henderson made her young Dominican monk wear jeans and sweater while Father Wingfield-Digby SJ and the Rev W R Rodgers of the same Ulster Presbyterian Church as Monteith, sported tweeds and the monocled Gwen Le Gallienne aggressively kept to her role as The Baron. One day before Monteith's secretary went on a business trip to New York I gave a party during which an Irish actor then in a Louis MacNeice play, brought up sectarian issues and Monteith had reason to be upset, but that was the first and only occasion when any of my friends with all their disparate backgrounds and beliefs, hurled sectarian insults.

In 1949 Charles Monteith set forth in *The Times* the Ulsterman's position about the Border, giving his address as All Souls, Oxford. But the Roman Catholic who became a Fellow of Balliol and publisher at the Oxford University Press, Dan Davin, severely criticised Monteith's view. Dan's first twenty years in an Irish Roman Catholic community in New Zealand provided excellent material for him as a novelist but I recall him best as a

wartime major keeping company with Dylan Thomas and Wyn Henderson as they made their way up to Dil de Rohan's flat at Selwyn House from Cyril Connolly's ground floor *Horizon* office. An inveterate pub man, Dan called his memoirs *Closing Times*, a book with fine portraits of Louis MacNeice and Bertie Rodgers and others who came to my flat after closing time. He became such a brilliant discoverer of new authors that the post of Oxford Academic Publisher was created in his honour. When Dan retired from his Professorial Fellowship in 1978, Christopher Hill, the Master of Balliol, remarked, 'If for Dan to understand all is not to forgive all, that is because he recognises distinctions between himself and God.'

Of those alive today who would meet Charles Monteith and Louis MacNeice at my home during 1960s lunch-times and later see Dan Davin with Louis and me in the pub are Denys and Rita Hawthorne, as well as Rita's Belfast-born brother-in-law Eric Ewens who with his girlfriend, Maggie Luce, shared my Guilford Street flat for four years. Trouble arose from professional jealousy, much of which stemmed from Wyn Henderson whose authors from the Hours Press had gone to Fabers and not to Dan Davin at the OUP. Dan had given advances to MacNeice and Rodgers and others to write a book about Ireland which never materialised, although all their names appeared in my book *Ulster* which Charles Monteith commissioned in conjunction with the new government of Terence O'Neill. We saw signs of change under O'Neill for the Catholic minority and Sir Francis Evans, the Ulster Agent in London, wrote to Monteith on 31 August 1965, 'Thank you very much for your letter of August 26 telling me that Robin Bryans' "*Ulster*" has had such outstanding recognition. This is very pleasing indeed and I send congratulations to both yourself and him.'

At my home Monteith had met leading Catholics and Protestants who seemed prepared to live and work together. The press had listed the names of those from both sides of the sectarian divide who approved my twin principles of giving a friendly hand across the Border while simultaneously fighting the common enemy of unemployment, that dread spectre of the 1930s when Charles Monteith and I were schoolboys in Belfast. The familiar voice of the 1930s preaching 'God is Love' on the Custom House steps, Hellfire Jack Bryans had, by July 1970, reached Home Secretary Maudling in London and was getting headlines in the press because Jack, as the head of the Orange Order, refused to call off Orange marches which would provoke violence.

My 1964 book, *Ulster*, made it clear that I did not approve of Ian Paisley's movement which in the end led O'Neill to resign. On the other hand, it was the Master of Balliol who said of Dan Davin, 'to understand all is not to forgive all.' For years London and Oxford pubs would hear before and after closing time talk of the definitive book about Ireland which was in preparation

with poets Louis MacNeice and Bertie Rodgers as its two leading authors. But in spite of all the pub talk, the book never got finished. Bearing in mind this cautionary tale of spent advances but no book, I never pressed Fabers for larger sums in advance for my own travel books. Taking publishers for a ride in that way had been a long-standing joke in the literary scene.

The **Daily Telegraph** wrote of Dan Davin, 'he married, in 1939, Winifred Gonley who, together with their three daughters, helped to make the Davin home one of the most hospitable in Oxford.' Domestic tranquility suffered most disruption from Dylan Thomas and his stormy affair with the first Mrs A J P Taylor. Both Louis MacNeice and Bertie Rodgers stoked-up passionate affairs with other friends' wives as well as having wives and children of their own who would appear at my home in London and Dan Davin's in Oxford. These goings-on continued the style of love in a literary climate going back to pre-war days and the fiery romance between Wyn Henderson and the young Dylan Thomas.

Wyn certainly lived up to the reputation of being 'dangerous' given her by Havelock Ellis, as those found out who believed in John Sparrow's creed that only practising male homosexuals can be geniuses. During more than three decades at the Oxford University Press it particularly galled Dan Davin that he had to endure the abuse heaped on his author, Helen Gardener, by John Sparrow. For many years people acknowledged Evan Tredegar as the authority on John Donne, and Evan met the Winchester schoolboy Sparrow who enjoyed precocious notoriety as another authority on John Donne and the joys of birching. Sparrow's jealousy over Helen Gardener being taken more seriously than him at the Lady Chatterley trial in no way influenced Oxford University which eventually promoted her as the Merton Professor of English Literature while the Oxford Academic Publisher, Dan Davin, brought out her books on John Donne and others. Sparrow made a great mistake by getting his knife into Helen Gardener. But just as the dangerous Wyn Henderson prised Dylan Thomas away from Evan Tredegar's sherry and princesses, so Wyn also helped to get one of Sparrow's favourite boyfriends into a young woman's bed and marriage.

Although Wyn Henderson's publishing career became known mainly through her association with Nancy Cunard at the Hours Press in France, she had been 'the leading light' with James Cleugh at the Aquila Press, and as such had known Gerald Hamilton when he emerged from Brixton Prison as a political prisoner at the respective ends of the First and Second World Wars. But Wyn boasted more about Aleister Crowley than she did about his tenant, Gerald Hamilton. Before Jesus Chutney appeared on the scene, it had been Wyn who provided her menses to be mixed with milk, urine, hashish and wheat for the Great Beast's unholy communion. Greater scholars than John

Sparrow enjoyed this form of black mass which certainly differed from the all-male version held in an Oxford chapel when Maurice Bowra became Warden of Wadham College. Tom Driberg came into possession of Crowley's diary together with oaths of allegiance, and Driberg wrote, 'To my surprise, one of the signatures was that of J W N Sullivan, one of the most distinguished mathematicians of the century.'

It certainly did not surprise me that John Betjeman linked the names of John Sparrow and Tom Driberg when acknowledging their 'valuable suggestions' for **Summoned by Bells**. The Scourge of Left-wing students, Sparrow, and the Conscience of the Left, Driberg, had in common their gay 'brotherhood.' In the end, Driberg moved away from Bloomsbury where Wyn and Dil de Rohan had not been afraid of him, though I doubt whether they would have resorted to using scissors in public like the Warden of All Souls, John Sparrow.

Like Adeline de la Feld, translations from Russian, French and Italian preoccupied James Cleugh who also got much involved with Peter Churchill in the Spanish Civil War. Disagreement over translation rights led to Adeline de la Feld and James Cleugh, the director of the Aquila Press, parting company, while Adeline and Wyn Henderson also quarrelled when the Hours Press published **Black Man and White Ladyship**. John Sparrow and Adeline's nephew, Michael Rosse, were exact contemporaries and knew the 'astonishing, fat Mrs Henderson' described in Evelyn Waugh's 1930 diary. That Wyn was still alive 35 years later and marrying a young monk was even more astonishing to John Sparrow who championed the gay poets as Wyn did the non-gay.

Having failed to get Harold Nicolson elected as Professor of Poetry at Oxford, Sparrow himself stood in 1978 but the university expressed its contempt for him by voting in the relatively unknown John Jones. The students' demand for reform of All Souls more or less coincided with Bridget Parsons's resentment of all those who had gone up to Oxford with her brother Michael and Sparrow who was elected a Fellow of All Souls in 1929. I had admired Sparrow sufficiently to record his friends and enemies in a number of my books, but the evidence in court showed that as early in 1961 I deeply resented the equating of genius with male homosexuality. Auberon Waugh describes Sparrow's life as 'benign inactivity' and this corresponds to Sparrow's own lines, Postponing and deferring, day by day, / He quite procrastinated life away.' Alas, Sparrow was so active with his fists, scissors, telephone, acid wit and promotion of sadism that I spent years fighting him in and out of the law courts.

However much poets liked to be published by the Oxford University Press, its lists never acquired the same literary prestige as that of Faber and

Faber before T S Eliot died and Charles Monteith took over as poetry editor. Had there been less money in the Sparrow household, the 'benign inactivity' might have been avoided out of necessity and Sparrow might have become a better poet than the man of letters and classical scholar he undoubtedly was. The poet Eliot published and wished to share his home with, was the working-class A L Rowse who made it to All Souls. Rowse complained that Warden Sparrow never read his books, 'Do you know **Tudor Cornwall**, John,' to which Sparrow replied, 'No but do you know Stuart Hampshire.'

Dr Rowse has such a unique experience of Oxford in general and of All Souls in particular, that his **Private Lives of the Fellows of All Souls**, cannot, like the Hess papers, be read until the next century. Meanwhile in 1989 he gave us a glimpse in **Friends and Contemporaries**, and reviewing it under the headline, 'Spanking a pretty little bottom' Hugh Montgomery-Massingberd wrote in the **Daily Telegraph**, 'and in the question of "size," Lord David Cecil, he assures the reader, was "enormously equipped for sex;" Sir Maurice Bowra was "better equipped" than John Haldane, who apparently had a small one.' These of course could be compared at the enclosure on the Cherwell River called Parson's Pleasure preserved over hundreds of years until 1992 for nude swimming both by dons and their undergraduates. The best-known story of Parson's Pleasure tells of women passing in punts and the men quickly covering their genitals with towels, except for Maurice Bowra who covered his head saying, 'It is the only part of me they would recognise.' The size of their organs interested me not at all, but I read their books to see who's had who in literary sizes.

Tom Driberg wrote of Oxford, 'the most rewarding friendship that I formed there was with Wystan Auden - destined to become, after T S Eliot, the greatest poet of my lifetime. I may possibly have the right to claim a small share in this triumph; for, only a few years ago, he gave me a copy of one of his books inscribed "To Tom Driberg, who read me **The Waste Land**." His recollection was correct: we read this truly epoch-making poem for the first time together: read it, standing side by side in my rooms...I read **The Waste Land** for the first time in 1943 at 20 Farnham Road, Bangor, Co Down, home of Lynn Reilly, an older schoolboy, who like Charles Monteith, went to Inst in Belfast. Lynn and his mother were with me the night I stood up at a missionary service and offered myself for training which, of course, eventually landed me in Wales the following year. Lynn and I spent many weekends exploring the Irish coast and examining my early poems which one day Eliot's firm published.

Through Adeline de la Feld's influence I came to understand the Christian ethic in Eliot's work, and because of my 1961 tape-recording of John Sparrow's views on Eliot, I kept Sparrow posted on the most recent

literary criticisms of Eliot. My nephew, Clive Cressy, was already a medical doctor when he did his PhD at Oxford on the use of Christian and oriental thought in Eliot's own early poetry, and wrote, 'Eliot's symbolism is complex; he conflates several sources, and once they have been adopted to his purpose, they take on meanings which, in some cases, differ greatly from those which they had in their original contexts. Nevertheless, these contexts are not unimportant, and an examination of them is essential if we are to understand how Eliot uses them, and their relationship to his poetry....Narcissus, like the moth, is physically broken, and he too achieves the end of his desire. The final embrace is followed by surrender and satisfaction, suggesting subsequent consummation and spiritual union through death: **So he became a dancer to God./ Because his flesh was in love with the burning arrows/ He danced on the hot sand/ Until the arrows came./ As he embraced them his white skin surrendered itself to the redness of blood, and satisfied him.** Yet Narcissus's end is described ambiguously, with both spiritual and sensual connotations ("in love." "satisfied"). The latter are lacking in **The Burnt Dancer**. If considered in the light of Eliot's trenchant condemnation of "orgiastic mysticism," the observer's stance could also be regarded as a precursory, implicit criticism, not of religious mysticism in general but, of the particular form of mysticism in which Eliot early on saw an excess of emotional and sensual ecstasy.'

However much Evan Tredegar and Frank Shelley-Mills condemned the form of Eliot's poetry, their views on Narcissus and St John of the Cross and suchlike morbidity spiced with that oriental touch they all got from Ouspensky, coincided with Eliot's concerns. The moth dazzled by the candle flame can while burning its wings cry out, 'Blessed be this torch.' I simply could not fit into this sado-masochistic scene. Had Sparrow tried to use his scissors on my long hair in 1969, I would have turned on him in the same way as the Warden of All Souls attacked James Pope-Hennessy. I did not approve of the misery he caused those who would not swallow his specious views on genius and took Pope-Hennessy's view that Sparrow was a figure of contempt at Oxford. There were no High Court writs for my friends who sent up Sparrow in their books. But I had to be chastised by more than malicious telephone calls because I dared to encourage students who asked for reasonable explanations of Sparrow's theories. But All Souls was not a students' college and someone had to be punished for putting in print to Sparrow the questions raised by students. Since dons 'well equipped for sex' were so appreciated by the mysogynist Warden Sparrow, he would naturally turn on a defenceless and penis-less figure such as Helen Gardener. Sparrow loved flogging, so I could hardly be accused of being inaccurate when I wrote that had Helen Gardener been a well-equipped butch sailor she would not so readily have

been dismissed.

But T S Eliot, like Frank Shelley-Mills and Evan Tredegar, had aspects of his nature other than the moth's love of the candle flame burning its wings. Much has been written of Eliot's schoolboy pranks such as sending up his fellow Faber directors with passing-off letters from Camden Council, stink bombs, fart cushions, and using green face-powder to make himself more ghoulish, while espousal of the English upper-class did not blind him to such things as for example that 'Bishops are a part of English culture, and horses and dogs a part of English religion.'

Eliot had been advised to omit the original title, **He Do The Police In Different Voices** of the poem beginning with the line from the Anglican burial service, 'I am the Resurrection and the life.' Eliot is seen there quoting other authors, for in Dickens's **Our Mutual Friend** the poor widow, Betty Higden, asks her adopted son, Sloppy, to read her the newspapers because, 'You mightn't think it, but Sloppy is a beautiful reader of a newspaper. He do the Police in different voices.'

Eliot certainly did Anglican parsonical voices well whereas John Sparrow lacked skill with his telephone voices especially when drunk, and he became so well-known for hoax calls that the **Daily Telegraph** checked twice over Harold Macmillan's supposed death after dinner, as the editor confirmed when he wrote, 'The Warden had a disturbed night. He also received two check calls from this office.' Prime Minister Macmillan had not been pleased in 1960 with the poisoned letters put around against him during the chancellorship race at Oxford, nor with the headlines the same year Bridget Parsons made on the eve of her step-nephew's marriage to Princess Margaret after Bridget had dined with Mac's nephew, the Duke of Devonshire. Bridget had been glad enough when John Betjeman went with her to the court over the subsequent drunk-driving charge, but she turned against the poet when he grew close to the Snowdons.

Like many others of his Oxford youth, Sparrow found Bridget's brother, Michael Rosse, not to have good manners, as Evelyn Waugh wrote on Rosse when they were at Oxford in the 1920s. Becoming Princess Margaret's stepfather-in-law seemed to swell Michael's head even more, which did not escape the notice of his aunt, Adeline de la Feld, who eventually disinherited him. Telephoning Lord Rosse with invitations to non-existent parties at country houses was innocent fun compared with malicious midnight calls which nearly drove Bridget Parsons out of her mind as retaliation because she dared to tell the truth about Sparrow and Guy Burgess in the war. My own method for dealing with Sparrow and his associates was no secret. I had the tape-recordings of Sparrow's opinions as well as books before the High Court in which I showed how I used pen-names such as 'Mary Huxtable'

to confound legal authorities who worked by the Old Boy network and were totally devoid of compassion or any sense of natural justice. Malicious telephone calls to defenceless women and the scattering of gagging writs around like confetti, became favourite topics in my writing about Warden Sparrow. The Fellows of All Souls were known as 'The Fussy Fifty' through being Oxford's elite academics. Over the years I got to know a number of them when we researched books together in such places as Greece and Malta. One wrote of his 'many years of warm personal friendship' with me, but he had earlier written of his shame at perpetually asking me to ghost his own writing, a matter that was not supposed to come out in Mr Justice Swanwick's court. I was too fussy over accuracy in my books about Sparrow's monstrous claims and behaviour.

In the spy-catching game Sparrow remained closest to Goronwy Rees, the former Estate Bursar at All Souls, who as a young Fellow in 1932 had met Guy Burgess who made a 'tentative pass' but they remained 'close friends on the platonic level' according to Andrew Boyle's **The Climate of Treason**. By the time Boyle interviewed both Rees and me in 1979 for that book, Sparrow had moved out of the spacious Warden's Lodge to 'exile' in an Iffley flat where Sparrow anxiously awaited news of any changes the new Warden, Patrick Neill, was making to the lodge. Rees could tell Sparrow about hand-printed wallpaper for the Warden's Lodge. This was being designed at the bottom of Goronwy's garden in Martha Armitage's studio. Martha had visited All Souls and told us about the state John Sparrow had left the rooms in for which she was making the new paper in the grounds of Strand-on-the-Green House. By then, the close-knit Strand-on-the-Green community I had known in the 1960s, had suffered two rifts that came under public scrutiny in court and the press.

Edward Armitage, widely respected as a sensitive architect, had to repair damage to his own facade. As the house was already ancient in the 18th century when Joe Miller restored it, going back to the distant past as a royal residence, Armitage's plans were so severely criticised that a long and expensive public enquiry followed and neighbours, who over the years had eaten with Ruth Armitage and myself, were forced to take sides. But the neighbours were equally divided when a sex scandal ended in suicide. Goronwy Rees and I would walk all the way down river to meet at Pat Magee's pub in Hammersmith to avoid taking either side.

Ruth and Edward Armitage's father was the sculptor, Joseph, and the money that enabled the father to buy Strand-on-the-Green House from a member of the Churchill family, came from his work at Windsor, and when showing state visitors around Windsor Castle, Anthony Blunt liked to explain the significance of the heraldic figures, the King's Beasts, sculpted by

Armitage as pinnacles on St George's Chapel. The Round Tower at Windsor housed the Royal Archives and it was the Registrar, Jane Langton, who asked me to lodge my royal photographs there. Harold Nicolson got the royal commission to write the biography of King George V, and James Pope-Hennessy that of Queen Mary, so they both had to research at the Round Tower, although James also spent a long time researching at Abbey Leix with Bridget Parsons, her mother and her Aunt Adeline.

John Sparrow knew both royal biographers well, and through them got to know how more than Blunt's family failed to get a mention in Pope-Hennessy's Queen Mary biography. James was closer to Anthony Blunt's sex circle and academically to the Courtauld Institute than he was to Warden Sparrow or All Souls. Although Sparrow's and my publisher, Faber and Faber, caused eyebrows to be raised when they published *Who's Had Who*, John Sparrow did not fill-in the form at the back of the book as requested by Fabers, to tell who had who in Adeline de la Feld's family. A Faber author, Brian Fothergill, whose name appeared in the High Court papers, wrote a book as to who, apart from Cousin William 'Kitty' Courtenay, was bugged by William Beckford. But whether Beckford's descendants, Bridget and Desmond Parsons suffered from the mental 'Beckford Disease', Fothergill could only conjecture. Fothergill was an opera buff and I once introduced him to Bridget Parsons at Covent Garden and the BBC asked me to review his work.

Another biographer of Beckford of Fonthill, James Lees-Milne, knew the Parsons brothers before I was born for he went to Eton with them. But however often and with whatever great affection he wrote of Bridget and others in her family, Lees-Milne said in a letter to me, 'Even so, I must admit that Bridget, and Desmond too, were apt to be discontented, a trait they inherited, I imagine from their mother . . . and does it, I wonder, come from William Beckford, from whom I know the Parsons to be descended?' Anthony Blunt had started in the 1920s the vogue for the work and life-style of William Beckford. How right Bridget Parsons's allegations turned out to be. She did not live to see Blunt exposed as the Russian spy she claimed him to be, and knew James Pope-Hennessy played with danger that did indeed lead to his murder by 'rough trade.' Bridget had an obsession with life at Kensington Palace, but again, she did not live to see the Snowdons' divorce which she had long prophesied.

James Lees-Milne, not John Sparrow, wrote the biography of Harold Nicolson, explaining how the row dragged on after Sparrow assaulted Pope-Hennessy in 1962, 'A few days later he (Nicolson) told Elvira Niggeman that John and James continued to bicker, but comparatively amicably. "John, why ever is it that you have never accomplished anything in life?" James asked

provocatively. "Well, James, I am the Warden of All Souls." "Yes, in the old days that was a most honourable title. But you have let it down and it is now a comic job." "Anyhow," John answered, "I am not a debauched pervert such as you are." "You are too old in any case to indulge in debauchery," came the swift retort. Whereupon Harold intervened: "Now, children, shut up and let us go to the *taverna*." But children are not normally up at 2.30 in the morning making hoax telephone calls to the *Daily Telegraph* saying that a former Prime Minister is dead.

Sparrow regarded Pope-Hennessy as a debauched pervert because the younger man preferred coloured male lovers as well as 'Irish navvies' whereas Sparrow knew that for English gentlemen only youths well-birched at public schools and displaying their genitals at Parson's Pleasure would do. In the 1950s Pope-Hennessy had an affair with a striking-looking Chinese student who intrigued Adeline de la Feld with his knowledge of eastern religions, although he had given up Buddhism when entered at a Christian mission school in Hong Kong from where a scholarship brought him to an English university and to James's bed. So impressed was Adeline with his interest in Desmond Parsons's Chinese translations that she adopted the student's younger brother and paid for him to go to the same mission school.

John Sparrow was well aware why Desmond Parsons regarded himself as unlucky and was not allowed to follow his brother, Michael Rosse, and the 'Rotten One', Brian Howard, to Oxford, and why Bridget refused to marry Prince George of Kent. Despite repeated warnings from his fellow royal-biographer, Harold Nicolson, not to talk about royal sex relationships with Noel Coward and the amount of publishers' advances, James Pope-Hennessy simply could not resist bragging to his 'rough trade,' and that led to his murder.

Billy Hoskins, as a married and happy man, could not stand the bitchy bickering of common-room life and retired 'in despair' to his native Devon. He was outraged when a Fellow of All Souls brought Billy's name before the High Court in my dispute with All Souls. Others who wrote to me, knowing how Sparrow had turned his wardenship into 'a comic job', supplied me with masses of letters which they in turn thought should be set before the courts. As their letters poured into Ruth Armitage's house at Strand-on-the-Green, I consulted another tenant, Harry Kemlo, the head of a City firm of solicitors who remained in touch with a former barrister he had briefed, but who had since become Lord Wilberforce, a Law Lord and High Steward of Oxford University. As a Fellow of All Souls, Lord Wilberforce did not like his name being dropped in the dispute between Sparrow and me over Sparrow's treatment of female students. The Kemlos and the Gowings had been next-door neighbours for many years and raised their families side by side, and knew how right the press was to nominate Professor Margaret Gowing as the

first woman Fellow of All Souls.

Before Ruth Armitage drove me from Strand-on-the-Green to London Airport to fly to the West Indies in 1965 to write a book about the islands for Fabers, there was much talk about a new poet called Seamus Heaney and so while not surprised I felt pleased to get a copy of Heaney's **Death of a Naturalist** enclosed with Charles Monteith's letter of 20 June 1966, 'I thought you might like to see this - the most recent Ulster addition to our list. Seamus Heaney is, I think, an extremely promising young poet - and this first book of his has already had some absolutely excellent reviews over here. He was born on a farm in County Derry; and he's just been appointed a lecturer in English at Queens. Before that he taught for a year or two at St Joseph's Teacher Training College. He's an exceptionally nice person; and we must certainly arrange a meeting when you're over here, Yours, Charles.'

Naturally Fabers were delighted when Seamus Heaney became Professor of Poetry at Oxford in 1989. The Oxford Academic Publisher, Dan Davin, who had so opposed Monteith's 1949 views in **The Times** about the Irish Border, nevertheless had to admit that Charles Monteith, like Seamus Heaney, made a fantastic balancing act of Celtic and Anglo-Saxon cultures which I find conspicuously absent from Ken Livingstone's assessment of the Ulster situation. Only when Livingstone's Dublin associate Frank Doherty, editor of **Now** magazine, came to interview me about Lord Mountbatten, was I asked if I knew a poet called Gerard Carey who, of course, I had met with his girlfriend while Gerard attended Sussex University in the early 1970s when we all backed Bernadette Devlin's cause, One Man One Vote. Gerard brought me a copy of his poems **Where There's Fire** which so interested Peter Churchill then staying with me in Rottingdean, that Gerard went home to the village and returned with a signed copy for Peter, which is one of the papers I inherited from Peter, that founder of the Political Research Bureau for the Labour Party. Unfortunately, it seems that Ken Livingstone and his supporters did not do enough political or any other kind of research before making their outrageous claims in print about Dickie Mountbatten, Peter Churchill and me.

I had assumed that Lord Mountbatten and our still-living friend, Betty Crichton, like Charles Monteith and Seamus Heaney, had also been involved in balancing Celtic and Anglo-Saxon attitudes before the IRA blew up his boat, killing amongst others the 16-year old Paul Maxwell from Enniskillen. After the war a delighted Dickie Mountbatten had crossed the Border to see Pud Grosvenor settling into the house at Skea bought from the born-again Pilgrim, Jack Cathcart, a settling-in that did not last long because Skea's proximity to Alan Price's farm at Laragh led to embarrassment, so that Mountbatten felt even better pleased when the Grosvenors got rid of Skea and

bought Ely Island from Fred Cathcart. But it was that other Cathcart whose cattle I remembered as a boy on Skea Hill, George of Bellanaleck, who won where others failed in taking Alan Price to the law courts.

As chairman of Enniskillen District Council and High Sheriff for County Fermanagh, George Cathcart remained unaffected by the grandeur of the people he met and always returned to his mother's thatched shop at Bellanaleck. As a boy evacuee I had gone into Enniskillen once a week on my bike to get the local newspaper, **The Impartial Reporter**, from Larry Hall's shop. By 1988 the small shop had become a major firm selling books and publishing under Larry's son, David Hall, who with his wife Elizabeth entertained me at their home when the paperback edition of my book **Song of Erne** came out.

I gave a lecture in Enniskillen's new library and easily recognised George Cathcart and his wife Emily, as well as others mentioned in my books. Next day the Halls took me to lunch at the Cathcarts' old home, now transformed into a fashionable restaurant for those who like to enjoy good Irish cooking in authentic cottage surroundings. On 11 September 1990 a letter was sent to me, 'Though I write in my capacity as Convenor of the Parents' Council fund-raising group, you might recognise me better as Marion Cathcart Maxwell, daughter of George of Bellanaleck. We haven't met, though I have heard a lot from my parents, who say you have been a very good correspondent. I have, of course, read your books, and went as a young lassie with Rev Sproule to sing carols at the Grahams' house at Granshagh. My husband, John Maxwell, and I have been very much involved in getting the Enniskillen Integrated Primary School off the ground. It has been a project of special importance for John, whose son, Paul, was killed with Lord Mountbatten in 1979 at Mullaghmore. As part of our fund-raising programme, we are holding an auction on Thursday 27 September. A number of well-known people have kindly given us items for the auction. We felt that you would understand our aims and especially on account of your Fermanagh connections, we wondered if you would let us have something for the auction.'

The friendly Mountbatten had often been seen in Enniskillen's streets with always a word for Catholic and Protestant alike, and I considered the town's Integrated Primary School where children of all religions could get to know and trust each other, a most suitable memorial to all those killed recently by terrorists. I sent various books of poetry to the sale, including the first edition of Seamus Heaney's **Death of a Naturalist** and Brendan Kennelly's **Dream of a Black Fox**. Marion Maxwell wrote to me after the auction, 'I can't thank you enough for the package of books which you so thoughtfully put together. The letter from Charles Monteith of Faber and

Faber was most interesting and tied in very appropriately with the Seamus Heaney material, also from 1966, which he himself sent. It was also a happy coincidence that you should have so kindly sent the "Dream of a Black Fox", for Brendan himself sent us a real "conversation piece." A friend of his, and mine, Bill Vaughan who comes from Ballinamallard, inspired him to write a "Ballinamallard Limerick", a bit of witty nonsense about Bill and a Ballinamallard "doll" he sent the actual doll as well - one which hides a second head under her elegant dress so that she can be turned upside down and become a different doll. I understand they're made by the Ballinamallard Mothers' Union.'

A family known to the Cathcarts, the Mountbattens and me from the early 1940s were the Nixons, two of whose members went with Lord Mountbatten's relations to Canada in 1911 and were involved with schools, particularly Shawnigan Lake on Vancouver Island, where Adeline de la Feld joined me in 1950. Charles Monteith felt proud to be a publisher of poets and novelists from both sides of the Irish Border, yet even before T S Eliot's death Monteith had taken over the work of poets such as W H Auden, his friend.

Although Louis MacNeice's family delighted to meet Charles Monteith at my home, when Professor E R Dodds died, Dan Davin of the OUP became Louis's literary executor although Fabers continued to be his publishers. By then Dan, the once-proudly partisan youngster in the closely-knit Irish Roman Catholic community in South New Zealand, had lost his fervour and as the Oxford Academic Publisher proclaimed himself, 'anti-Communist and anti-Conservative.' Dan's novels reflect his early years in New Zealand and his non-fiction books the lives of other New Zealand authors. His literary career began with publication in Cyril Connolly's *Horizon* in Selwyn House whose stairs Dan would climb to see Dil de Rohan and that other New Zealand author, Beryl de Zoete. Fabers published Beryl's books and its director, T S Eliot, remained close to Arthur Waley, both men being in the Honours List as poets and both known in Bloomsbury for their years of sacrifice to difficult female partners. My own difficulty lay in trying to keep the peace while the mischief-making Dil de Rohan sought revenge for the non-publication of her **How Do You Do?**

The American professors bidding for letters at the 1990 Enniskillen auction had the same interests as their predecessors who bought Dil's letters at Christie's in 1960. T S Eliot, in spite of being the Greatest Living Poet, wanted nobody to consult any archives about him, for as far back as 1925 he forbade any official biography. Because I kept copies of Dil's letters that were sold, I knew how widely she boasted of having bled Ernest Hemingway's nose for daring to change Gertrude Stein's line in *Sacred Emily* from 'Rose is a rose is a rose' to 'A rose is a rose is a cabbage.' But Sir Francis Rose got more

than one bloody nose when Dil violently ejected him out of her flat.

T S Eliot used the more subtle means of sardonic wit to attack people and some of his most serious work contains ridiculous send-ups, so that even Ezra Pound described Eliot's religion as 'lousy,' to which Eliot replied with a caustic letter on 13 August 1954. This prompted Pound to write to Hemingway that Eliot had been 'rather edgy.' Pound was still a young poet when Eliot asked him to edit *The Waste Land*, with those dramatic opening lines from the Anglican burial service, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life,' Eliot's passage ending with 'I am the fire, and the butter also.'

Although I missed by a hair's breath joining Kelham as a student in 1944 because I could not go there for a personal interview, whereas the Barry School of Evangelism accepted me without one, I got to know Kelham chapel well with its famous arched rood by Sargent Jagger, Kelham, however, did recruit one of my former pupils at Clayesmore, Peter Hawkins, who was at Kelham during my 1960 visit when some of the community's 300 stainless steel plates were still being washed-up by Eliot's friend of the 1930s, Father Hume, who had been Chaplain then but who had meanwhile become the Father Director, in spite of or because of washing-up and his continued patching of his frayed scapular. Eliot went up to Kelham several times a year to make a retreat with that paragon of humility, Leslie Paul Hume, who had spent much of his ministry in the slums of African cities.

Adeline's correspondents over many years had included clergy and especially those who were authors of theological books. She wrote in Italian and English to Professor Rodney Poisson, the dean of an Anglican college in Canada, and after Adeline died his wife sent me those letters. I also received Adeline's correspondence with Professor Gordon Petter, son of the National Union of Protestants' founder, whose secretary was Ian Paisley's uncle in 1944, and Paisley himself being its leader in Belfast after his return there from the Barry School of Evangelism.

But I need not have been surprised by Adeline's and Gordon Petter's letters to each other because he rejected bigotry and joined Adeline's High Church and became a professor of history at a Roman Catholic university, when John Nation, a mutual friend of Adeline, the Petters and me, sent me the last three boxes of her papers, I found inside a large envelope containing letters to Adeline from Gordon Petter and his wife which I was to keep or 'destroy them if they are of no interest.' In view of what I had written in *The Protege* about Percival Petter's Protestants disrupting Bishop Wand's 1945 consecration in St Paul's Cathedral, I hardly expected to receive his son's letters to Adeline which I did not destroy but kept as important documents on the changes within the Anglican community.

On 11 November 1966, Gordon wrote to Adeline, 'I have been reading

a very interesting book **History Sacred and Profane** by Alan Richardson. They are his Bampton lectures for 1962 (he is a DD from Oxford & Prof of Religious Studies). Of course they are part of my study for my Philosophy of History Course.' Four years later Gordon Petter wrote, 'I was interested to read that you have made a resume of Alan Richardson's **History Sacred and Profane**. I think that it is an excellent idea to try and publish it in a journal. He is now Dean of York. Did I tell you that I had a very pleasant hour with him when I was over there the summer before last?'

Ever since she left Russia for the last time in 1913, when Adeline made resumes of Shestov's and Sologub's work in the **Fortnightly Review**, she had produced hundreds of other resumes from books in Russian, French and Italian as well as from English philosophers and historians. The hundreds may have been thousands because I never counted those at Birr Castle nor those her sister Lois burnt at Womersley Park prior to Princess Margaret's stay there with Lady de Vesci. The Communist Sylvia Pankhurst published those 1930s writings which Lois de Vesci thought unfit for royal eyes.

Before publishing her resumes Adeline had to get the authors' permission, and in the case of Dean Richardson's this was readily given because we had some interesting talks together in Nottingham where he was Professor of Theology. He lived on the Duke of Newcastle's city estate there, as did one of his colleagues, Peter McGegan, who loved showing off his latest car as he drove us to Kelham where Eliot's old friends did not conceal their surprise that the poet's firm of Faber and Faber had published eight of my books in three years, the one Fabers commissioned about the Azores being dedicated to Kelham's long-standing patroness, Adeline de la Feld.

Because Fabers invited the press to interview me in their boardroom in front of Jacob Epstein's bust of T S Eliot who was out of his office at the time, concerning their commission of my book on Morocco, my name became linked in print with Eliot's. He had been in Morocco at the time of the earthquake at Agadir and while in Tangier Eliot wrote out a fair copy of **The Waste Land** for the London Library's appeal fund. It was then that Eliot recalled a line which Vivien insisted be removed from **The Waste Land**, and now nearly forty years later he restored the line. I knew Eliot indirectly as a High Churchman via Father Cheetham and the Kelham connection. Although Adeline's niece, Bridget Parsons, had survived the sinking of the Cunard line in the Grosvenor Square ballroom of the 1920s when Robert Sencourt appeared from New Zealand, I was born too late to know Eliot then.

To serve Father Cheetham as Vicar's Warden for so many years might seem a strange destination for Eliot whose road had early taken him through the heyday of his relationship with his wife Vivien when they worked on the **Criterion** together. The extent of her influence is shown by the fact that

figures such as Mary Hutchinson and Ottoline Morrell were satirised so savagely that those ladies complained to Eliot who had no easy task placating them. Vivien wrote these send-ups because she knew that her husband dined privately with more than Nancy Cunard.

Vivien Eliot would probably have agreed that Nancy was indeed portrayed in **The Waste Land** as Fresca, the spoilt society hostess who wants to be a writer. Eliot certainly had interests in other women and this probably contributed to the intensely nervous and jealous Vivien's insanity which, in its turn, doubtless raised the spectre of guilt which haunted Eliot for years and which for years he tried to exorcise by tolerating Father Cheetham and wheeling the insufferable John Hayward in all weathers to the park. A repetitive theme of Adeline's written remarks is the behaviour she despised of the same social set parodied by Vivien Eliot in the **Criterion** and attacked by Nancy Cunard in the even more remarkable **Black Man and White Ladyship**. Robert Sencourt perhaps knew as little about the French student, Jean Verdenal, as Ken Livingstone knew about me, as shown by the ridiculous claim in **Livingstone's Labour** that Blunt was my lover.

I was prepared to support Father Colin Gill's fight to save Holy Trinity Church but not his view that since Eliot was a genius he must therefore also be a practising homosexual. One unusual aspect of my High Court action was that I wrote my open-letters over my name and address, unlike Father Gill's Oxford friend, Sir Maurice Bowra, who attacked Harold Macmillan anonymously to stop the 1960 Prime Minister from becoming Chancellor of the university.

T S Eliot had been asked by Bishop George Bell of Chichester to write **Murder in the Cathedral** about the killing of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas à Becket. Assassination of a different sort and of another Canterbury archbishop, Runcie, was attempted by a Chichester prebendary, the Rev Dr Gareth Bennett, who wrote his attack anonymously in a Crockford's introduction and then, when named by the press, poisoned his cat before killing himself. Bishop Eric Kemp celebrated the prebendary's requiem mass and was photographed by press and television afterwards.

Garry Bennett was an Oxford don and author who held the Wiccamaical stall in Chichester Cathedral as his friend Adam Fox had done and who had also been an Oxford don for much of his life. But their approach to the priesthood differed considerably and while Adam went on to become Sub-Dean of Westminster Abbey, Garry's career stagnated and he felt his qualifications insufficiently appreciated and that aspects of his private life had prevented him from collecting even a sub-deanery. I was sorry for Garry and much would come out at his inquest. But there would be no inquest for Stephen Waring, a boy who ran away from Kincora Boys' Home after being

buggered by force, and who killed himself rather than go back under official duress for more such treatment at the hands of born-again Christians. Such an inquest would have caused a major political scandal for Attorney General Silkin, so Stephen's suicide had to be hushed up. A similar thing happened after the poisoning of Danylo Skoropadsky, no inquest, although it was clearly murder. Nor were there inquests on a number of suspicious deaths involved with Evan Tredegar and Aleister Crowley.

The Church of England's General Synod discussed the subject of homosexual clergy and afterwards Bishop Kemp wrote, 'It is clear that the agitation provoked by the motion and by its supporters has encouraged what amounts to a witch-hunt in this field and created an atmosphere of suspicion which is damaging to many who have done no wrong. Those who spread about such suspicion, those for example who write anonymous letters to me about the clergy, are allying themselves with the worst of the gutter press whose conduct in the debate has been despicable beyond belief.' Some of Bishop Kemp's problems with clergy appeared in the **Daily Telegraph** and not simply those which ended in the criminal courts but also the prolonged case of a vicar who did not go to public lavatories seeking semen but who was alleged to have had sex with a woman not his wife in the hallway and other unusual places.

After getting his immunity in 1964 Blunt delighted to read in **Ulster** what I had written with his help about his closest schoolfriend, Louis MacNeice, and the poet's bishop father and Alan Buchanan the curate Blunt knew best as the Archbishop of Dublin much seen in royal circles. My criticism of Ian Paisley also went down well with Blunt's political plot to smear Paisley as a homosexual, solely on the basis that student Paisley had shared a bedroom with Dennis Parry whose bust now adorns Paisley's church. The Roman Catholic journalist, Liam Clarke, wrote about my clearing Paisley's and Parry's names of Blunt's smear, and on 10 May of the same year, 1987, the **Sunday World** carried Clarke's article, 'John McKeague, another well known homosexual who was killed in mysterious circumstances, was also an agent whose information was routinely collated in the restricted corridor at military headquarters in Lisburn.'

Captain Colin Wallace 'was one of the highest flyers in the British Army in Northern Ireland. He was suddenly moved from the province and then discharged,' to quote Paul Foot's book **Who Framed Colin Wallace?** That book discloses how the **Sunday World** published a complete supplement on Colin Wallace and his army colleagues, showing how they set up 'magic circles' in Catholic areas with chicken blood and feathers and crosses hung upside down on bushes as signs leading to the black mass centres. No UK government likes the public of mainland Britain to know what actually goes

on in Northern Ireland, as I have frequently written, statements which Bishop Kemp thought sufficiently provocative to give to his legal advisers for the High Court.

During 1976, I took whoever happened to be staying with me, sometimes my son Christopher and his wife, to play darts at the Queen Victoria pub in Rottingdean. Keith Gilbert always joined us with Jimmy and Johnny Farr and their parents. Keith and the local police would often challenge me at chess. The police asked if we had seen much of Aleister Crowley's black mass people around Ovingdean because more than usual black chicken feathers and blood had been seen, and the unsolved murder of Keith's young schoolfriend was still on police record.

Father Michael Butler, the Vicar of Ovingdean, had trained at Kelham and we used to talk about T S Eliot's friends on the staff there. Then one day Father Butler came to see me about the police and I gave him my views about the fact that they had to cope with Father Colin Gill and with George Kinnaird's sado/masochistic scene. An appearance I had made in court resulted from my attempt to stop the flow of blood when Sarah Churchill married the 23rd Baron Audley and honeymooned at 3 Burlington Street, George Kinnaird's Brighton house. George Hayim, in his autobiography **Thou Shalt Not Uncover Thy Mother's Nakedness** describes Audley at a Catholic open prison in France, 'On one of Michel's social visits, he came across a penniless British wimp who had just uncovered his family title. He was now Lord Audley - penniless and desperate. "Become a Catholic and join us - then you can live for nothing." Lord Audley moved in with them there and then. Within a week trouble started. Michel had a favourite amongst the prisoners. Audley another...Audley's bleak future had a moment's respite when he hit the news by marrying Churchill's daughter. He again hit the news when he was found drowned in the Port.'

Reviewing Hayim's book, Martin Cropper wrote in the **Daily Telegraph**, 'he flits around Europe fellating everything in trousers and some in cassocks.' On the train to Brighton George Hayim spoke to a young man and asked him what sort of sports he played. Some days later George returned to London and stayed with Robin Middleton, the Cambridge architectural historian whom Hayim describes in his book as 'my best friend.' I knew Robin Middleton as the best friend over many years of his live-in partner Ruth Lakofski, with whom I spent many afternoons dog-walking and exchanging letters about our strange friends.

Ruth Lakofski was certainly not pleased when two policemen appeared at breakfast-time wanting to interview George Hayim after his Brighton visit because a young man had been found strangled and his body hidden in a trunk. Scotland Yard wanted a formal statement and George wrote, 'Sir, This is to

certify that I like men. I get kicks by being overpowered by heterosexual athletes. I talk to everyone in buses, trams, trains and planes all over the world,' including, of course, the train to Brighton. George's travels take him to his various homes in London, Paris and Australia and when he dies his family fortune will find a permanent home in the state of Israel.

Sarah Churchill boasted, 'I'm not an alcoholic. I'm a dipsomaniac. I love the stuff.' So did her equally forthright father who never asked the Attorney General to cover-up her Brighton scandals or the press not to print, in contrast to that 'Conscience-of-the-Left,' Tom Driberg, who boasted openly about getting his own case rigged against the two out-of-work miners, and how his employer, Lord Beaverbrook, kept it out of the press. Knowing that George Kinnaird's bizarre life would be written about even more luridly after his death than before it, I wrote to Father Butler at Ovingdean about Father Gill's role in the sado/masochistic scenes which previously featured in the courts and press.

Father Butler did not answer but I got a High Court writ to stop me from sending copies to anybody else of my letter to him. Although my letter was to Father Butler, he did not become a plaintiff, nor did his bishop, Eric Kemp, ask him to swear an affidavit concerning the police visits to Ovingdean Church. But relying on central church funds, Kemp advised Canon Walters to sue and through him the Churchill name was introduced into the proceedings. Kemp, of course, was aware that the 'higher hands' of Labour's Attorney General, Sam Silkin, were behind the case and pulling strings with the courts as puppets.

However, what Bishop Kemp did not see were my many letters to and from Silkin's Cabinet colleagues about Harold Wilson. Silkin was interfering with the law courts in a blatantly outrageous way which Winston Churchill would never have allowed, not even to save his daughter, and by 1980 Prime Minister Thatcher had accused Silkin of abusing the courts. In 1987, she also told Ken Livingstone to take his Kincora 'evidence' to the police, so calling the Labour MP's bluff.

But Livingstone's Left-wing propaganda appeared to support Ian Paisley's Right-wing war-cry Save Ulster from Sodomy. A stirring war-cry indeed, but what did it mean? There is no doubt what Paisley meant by 'sodomy,' but what did he mean by 'Ulster'? The whole population of Ulster, which is partly in Eire, or just a few evangelicals like his former brother-in-the-Lord, John McKeague? The war-cry is, like many slogans, in fact meaningless. I had written in my books about the homosexuals I knew in Ulster, such as Moses Greer who appears in *No Surrender* going to dances in drag like his upper-crust counterpart Tibby Lecky-Browne-Lecky who adored to dance in the arms of a young sailor who by the time Evan Tredegar

introduced him to me had become Lieutenant Commander Anthony Heckstall-Smith DSO. Like Buster Crabb, Tony Heckstall-Smith was something of a war hero but Tony's hour of fame concerned royal boats not Russian warships.

Tony's father, Major Brooke Heckstall-Smith, proposed to the Yacht Club de France in 1904 that all rules of yacht measurement should be standardised and as a result wrote many books about yachting and became commander of the royal yacht *Britannia*, having to cope with the wretched Queen Mary who hated the sea and vomited. Tony and George Hayim had lived in a number of countries and while going to visit Tony in Brighton, George met the young man on the train who wrote, 'A peculiar man started up conversation with me. He asked what sports I did. Then he said, "I'm sure you could hold somebody down, make them helpless. I bet you'd know how to strangle them. You're powerful. Please ring me".'

In the way that Flora Robson and I had to cope with The Gorilla nearly strangling George Kinnaird and Father Gill in Brighton, so in London Ruth Lakofski and I had to deal with similar situations. While staying with Ruth and Robin Middleton, George Hayim fell for a boy called Edmond, 'Girls threw themselves at him. He was young, handsome, strong and "ze French lover."' Then George flew to Hollywood where his actor friend James Fox was filming in *The Chase* with Jane Fonda and Marlon Brando. Fox 'insisted' that Hayim write ten pages everyday about his love for Edmond and out of it came *Obsession*, described by Gore Vidal as 'a unique work, a story of sexual obsession that is marvellously funny.'

Tony Heckstall-Smith and Peter Churchill wrote books about their lovers who had been 'found out' and went to prison, an experience nobody has evoked more vividly than Hayim's lover, Jean Genet. But Ruth Lakofski and I went to the courts to try and save the authors and actors from prison where they might pick up Aids. During the early days of the epidemic Ruth would leave me in Kensington Gardens and dash home for telephone calls from friends dying of Aids in New York and other American cities. Sadly, she would bring me *The Times* obituary notices of decimated friends.

The Lowry-Corry family had always enthused to me over 'Our married sister,' Lady Florence Eden and when at 16 years-old I left Ireland for Wales, I carried letters of introduction to the Edens. Aids is no respecter of social rank and it was Prime Minister Thatcher and Lord Chancellor Hailsham who went to Nick Eden's memorial service, followed by the Princess of Wales visiting her friend dying of Aids in St Mary's Hospital where Ruth Lakofski had comforted one of the first victims.

In the weeks preceding Adeline's death, she was lovingly tended by John and Dagmar Nation and their grown-up children. On 27 October 1975

Dagmar wrote to me, 'You talk about her fondness for us, we are devoted to her, and all our children are very aware of the privilege and pleasure of knowing some one of her stature mentally and some one who has lived such an interesting life from them...She speaks of you with such affection, and all the papers and books that are to go to you are completely organized. She does harbour and run into the ground, special HATES, like her abhorrence of Trudeau. She forgets the many things she used to admire about him and is completely irrational and pig-headed about him...'

Over the years Adeline had changed her mind about more than Canada's Prime Minister Trudeau. Her special hates were people she thought behaved badly to her mother and then later to her niece, Bridget Parsons, such as Tony Heckstall-Smith and Noel Coward, the Tredegars, the Mountbattens and the Spanish Ambassador and others to be found in George Hayim's autobiography. In the 1930s George lived in George Street with his mother, as Adeline did with her mother, but for every different reasons. George writes, 'She (his mother) chose a fifteen-room ground-floor apartment in George Street probably because Wallis Simpson, soon to be Duchess of Windsor, had a flat in the same block.'

Whereas Adeline's approach to life was that of a heterosexual woman fighting for Women's Rights, George saw the same social set from his viewpoint as a masochistic homosexual. George proudly writes of leaving his mother in the car with the chauffeur one day while he went into church to service the vicar, while Adeline recalls her mother's horror at finding a sailor being serviced in Holy Trinity Church. Hayim took a job as a cleaner in a public lavatory and had himself photographed there to put pressure on his father to buy him a London flat, George's relationship with his Iraqi Jewish father being akin to Adeline's many years of quarrelling with her Christian father. Fights over money.

When the last three boxes of Adeline's papers arrived in England from the Nations on Vancouver Island, among the press cuttings I found the story and photographs of Fabers commissioning my book on Morocco. Adeline had been puzzled by Fabers' choice, out of all the books I had so far written for them, of **The Protege** to be in the picture of me standing by Epstein's bust of the then still-living T S Eliot. The poet had first visited Europe in 1910 and for over 50 years had lived in England as the father-of-modern-verse, beginning when Adeline espoused Futurism. So Adeline wondered why **The Protege** appeared in the picture with Epstein's Eliot because, of course, the book featured Evan Tredegar and Frank Shelley-Mills, those rivals of the soul of P B Shelley, who held modern verse in contempt and wrote effete sonnets in the manner of Lord Alfred Douglas whom they supported financially while being particularly cruel about Vivien Eliot's increasingly odd antics.

In March 1914 Adeline sent her translation of Chekov's short stories to Methuen and later wrote in **My Zapiski**, 'The MS was sent off with an accompanying letter in which I pointed out that I was offering this translation of a hitherto unknown Russian author, who, I thought, would interest British readers in view of the furore caused by the Russian ballets and the consequent attention given to Russia. After the customary three weeks Methuen returned the MS with a brief note saying, they did not consider an UNKNOWN Russian writer would be of any interest to the British reading public.'

Nobody could have arrived on the British publishing scene at a more opportune time than T S Eliot. Adeline defended him because he was a 'foreigner' and an unknown poet with new ideas on how verse could be art with neither set form nor rhyme. She despised those who mocked him for calling himself 'T S Eliot' instead of Tom Eliot, and in 1964 it annoyed her to see his name misspelt as 'Elliott' in the press Morocco interview with me next to his bust, 50 years after he set off one of literature's most violent furores with **The Waste Land**.

It did not surprise me to find none of the photographs which Adeline's nephew Lord Rosse sent her over the years showing royal house-parties at his various stately homes. The pictures absent from the three boxes from Canada, typified the atmosphere of 'damn Family Places' from which she had escaped, any of which could have been similar groups she remembered at Clumber with King Edward VII. Before the demolition of Forest Farm I had retrieved examples of the Clumber groups which I passed on to the present Lord Rosse. Forest Farm also yielded some smaller photographs which the Duchess Kathleen had removed there from Clumber where grateful royal guests had originally presented them.

Adeline contemptuously dismissed such memorabilia. 'That says the lot,' she commented on one small photograph given by Queen Victoria to her Secretary of State for the Colonies, the 5th Duke of Newcastle, Adeline's great-grandfather. It showed a royal wedding group with a bust of the late Prince Albert as the centre-piece flanked by his sorrowing widow seated, reading to a grandchild. The bride in all her finery, is banished to the background, as far away as possible from the beloved Albert's bust.

Adeline wrote of her nephew Desmond Parsons's death, 'But, from a tragic fate and destiny, there is no escape.' Adeline and I often talked about Lonsdale Bryans, author of **The Curve of Fate**. In **My Zapiski** she recorded youthful fantasy at Denby Grange, 'From a window looking on the park how often I tried to discern the figure of the messenger coming to announce deliverance. My planning consisted in escaping from the rock, the Family Place.'

The messenger appeared in the form of her mother's nephew, Prince

Filippo Doria, a Cambridge undergraduate. That university provided an ideal forum for Adeline's Futurism which regarded the past as dead, including such contemptible traditions representing her father gloating over the Samuel Pepys family portraits at Denby Grange, and her Uncle Newcastle jealously preserving the unread books at Clumber that came from William Beckford's Fonthill Abbey. Naturally, nobody dared to remind anybody else that Beckford asked for the trouble he got by bugging his 16-year old cousin Kitty, the future 9th Earl of Devon.

Adeline shared her Futurism enthusiasm with her cousin Filippo but he was fettered by being the heir of an estate immensely vaster than their Uncle Newcastle's ducal domain. Acclaimed as 'Filippo and Filippa' who despised the moribund ideas of D'Annunzio and Mussolini such as the plan to reproduce ancient Rome in concrete, the young cousins soon faced tragedy when a rowing accident at Cambridge turned Filippo into a cripple with tuberculosis of the spine. This put an end to the cousins' international tours preaching Futurism, for Prince Doria had to spend part of the year in a Swiss sanatorium.

Adeline wrote, 'In the New Year 1919 I worked with the Red X, then, translations from Italian into English required by the British Embassy. Filippo arrived from his sanatorium in Switzerland. How hidden, submerged lie our thought to others, submarine and profound. A calm surface, but oh, how troubled below. One day Filippo and I stood on the roof of his beautiful sei-cento Villa Pamphilij, surveying the lovely scene. Below, the formal garden with flower beds designed with the dove holding an olive branch in its beak, the heraldic emblem of the Pamphilij family; on the right the park and bosco, on the left the exquisite family mausoleum built to the memory of the lost Gianettino, and where Filippo's father also lay buried. In front, over the graceful fountain, beyond the Villa domain low-lying land stretching to the sea. We two stood alone viewing the scene bathed in sunshine. No human being about, not a sound. Moved by the silent beauty and the peace of it all, I sighed and remarked; "Very beautiful, isn't it?" Quickly, eagerly, Filippo replied: "I'll give it to you as a wedding present" almost in a tone as if he were offering me something he would be glad to be rid of. Startled, not fully understanding that it was an offer of marriage, I passed the offer with a semi-laugh.

"The next afternoon I sat reading in my room when there was a knock on the door and Filippo came in. Flinging himself on his knees beside me, clasping me in his arms he poured out a flood of words expressing his utter devotion and adoration. "I have loved you since the early days at Clumber" I heard him say. "All the time I think only of you." The words flowed on. I was a Queen, everything a queen should be, beautiful in mind and body.

Every gesture, look, inflection of tone, of voice, all of me was engraved in his heart. Struggling with his deep emotion, the tone became one almost of veneration and worship. Unsuspecting and unprepared for this declaration of vehement devotion, this out-burst, and torrent of words, this display of strong emotion from one usually so impassive, reticent, silent, I was confused. I stammered out that there was nothing sinful in his love for me, he must not say he was a miserable and unworthy wretch. On the contrary, it was I who felt undeserving of such deep devotion. Constrained, bound helpless by a sense of honour that a love affair between us was unthinkable I spoke fondly, lovingly at the same time retaining the position assigned to me of Queen-divinity, accepting his worship. The idea that marriage between us could be a possibility must not enter our minds. There was that time ten years before when my aunt abruptly shortened my visit and gave as her reason that relations between Filippo and I were going too far...a charming friend of ours, jesting one day remarked: "Why don't you marry him?" and then added with a laugh "mais non, ce serait presque de l'inceste." Perhaps I also felt the same, regarding Filippo as a fond brother. Did that unfortunate word "inceste" linger in my mind? His attentions to me had been always of an affectionate, fond brother, but no more. It was up to me to ensure that it went no further. The never altering circuit of our fate, as Robert Graves has said.'

To Adeline, living on a pittance of family allowance, this offer of marriage might have seemed a good way to escape the damn Family Place of Denby Grange for she would become chatelaine at some of Italy's greatest palaces and villas. And how puffed-up her father would be to have a daughter called the Princess Doria, Duchess of Avigliano. But hypocrisy formed no part of Adeline's nature and she knew why Rome had for so long called them Filippo and Filippa, for that city had much to laugh about in the House of Doria whose 'exquisite family mausoleum' in the grounds of the Villa Pamphilij, was a joke.

In *My Zapiski* Adeline wrote of all the family staying at the Palazzo Doria for the marriage of Filippo's seventeen-year old sister, Orietta, to Count Borromeo, "The occasion had been a more or less happy family gathering in Rome. Our hostess, my mother's younger sister, had spent the last fifteen years mourning the loss of her youngest child, a beautiful little boy called Gianettino, who died of meningitis, an agonizing loss. The on-dit in Rome whispered he was a love child. Now my aunt draped in black, shrouded in a cocoon of melancholy crept about the lofty apartments hung with fine and famous tapestries and pictures by noted artists, refused to see any but a few intimate friends. She did, however, attend the festivities put on for the wedding of her daughter Orietta.'

Rome's 'on-dit' knew that Princess Emily Doria had been for long

openly admired by that tireless womaniser Gabrielle D'Annunzio, just as her husband, Prince Alfonso Doria, openly kept his American mistress at the Villa Caprarola and brought her daughter Gladys Deacon to parties at the Palazzo Doria. That Princess Doria's great-grandfather, Thomas Hope, had raised a splendid mausoleum at the Deepdene for his young son Charles, who also died in Rome, seemed entirely natural, but that Emily Doria should also erect a costly tomb for her son by D'Annunzio, and afterwards also inter there her lawful husband, Prince Alfonso, seemed absurd to the Roman on-dit. Roman tongues wagged again when, twenty years after little Gianettino's death, his father D'Annunzio was wooing the boy's half-sister, Countess Borromeo, whose son Manole, told Gaia Servadio, 'I remember D'Annunzio at my mother's feet, holding a bunch of violets.'

The Doria family felt nothing but relief when Gladys Deacon moved out of the Villa Caprarola and into Blenheim Palace on marrying the Duke of Marlborough. But Italy had not seen the last of Churchill exuberance. At a party to mark Lady Diana Cooper's 40th birthday, Chips Channon threw a large party on the Venetian island of Murano and among the guests were Randolph Churchill who greeted Brendan Bracken as 'brother.' As many people believed Bracken to be Winston Churchill's bastard son this seemed poor taste, and when Bracken went after Randolph a fight started. Venice was outraged by the broken noses and jaws.

The nickname 'Randy' well-suited Randolph who lived up to it by embarking on an affair with the wife of his friend Lord Castlerosse and in the 1991 *Citadel of the Heart* history of the Churchills, John Pearson repeats the old story of Doris Castlerosse at the Murano Island party having sex with Randolph as she had earlier done with his father. On hearing that she had seduced his son Randolph, Winston remarked, 'Doris, you could make a corpse come.'

Adeline de la Feld, however, doubted whether Winston Churchill often got involved in such sexual triangles unlike D'Annunzio and others who as a matter of course liked to have affairs with at least two generations of the same family. Although Princess Emily Doria had asked her niece Adeline to leave the Palazzo Doria in 1909 because her cousin Filippo had become too fond of her, the princess loved seeing Adeline's brother, Kenelm, during his holidays because he brought his Oxford friends with him, Evan Tredegar and Lonsdale Bryans. The three boys had been at Eton when Emily's niece and Kenelm's sister, Florence, became a Catholic and married Col Vaughan who, like Evan, became a private chamberlain to various Popes, and although Princess Doria adored to see Evan and her nephew-by-marriage, Charlie Vaughan, in their gorgeous uniforms with His Holiness in St Peter's, she got an even bigger thrill when Evan, armed with his crucifix containing a relic of

the true cross, went to the mausoleum at the Villa Pamphilij and there invoked the spirit of the lamented Gianettino.

Emily Doria succumbed to Evan's occultism as completely as her friend, Verena Churchill, relied on the paranormal goings-on of Verena's spiritual-director/lesbian lover/daughter-in-law K. Like many others, Emily also loved the music Evan wrote to French, German or Italian words which a glass of champagne would set him singing, as much at the Villa Pamphilij before the First World War as at the deserted Baille Glas Church in 1944. Princess Doria, however, avoided embarrassment over Nina Hamnett's revelations about Evan's and Aleister Crowley's black mass doings on Sicily, for by the time Nina's book came out, Princess Emily Doria was herself entombed in the Villa Pamphilij's mausoleum.

The Sicilian temple's other visitors, Adeline de la Feld and her politician lover, went there for romantic dalliance rather than satanic evocation, for Adeline felt an affinity with the island's bleak grandeur and the people of its fishing villages. Her first translation from the Italian had been Grazia Deledda's novel of Sicilian passion *Elias Portolu*. But the realism Adeline read in the novels of another Sicilian writer, Giovanni Verga, also impressed her and intensified her loathing for D'Annunzio's writing in glorification of armies from the past.

When Filippo Doria married his Scottish nurse, Adeline spent more of her holidays with his sister Orietta Borromeo in Milan where she was reunited with some of the Demidoff family who had escaped the Russian Revolution. Diaghilev and his boyfriend Serge Lifar also brought many Russian friends back into Adeline's life in Milan which centred around La Scala and the musical friends of Giacomo Puccini, the composer who felt more at home in Milan's famous opera house than at Covent Garden crammed into Evan Tredegar's box with Russian archduchesses, a situation realistically depicted by Lady Lloyd George.

Adeline got to know Luchino Visconti well in that Milanese milieu, though she failed to understand his politics. Gaia Servadio wrote, 'Visconti hated D'Annunzio as the precursor of Fascist Nationalism, but he was also attracted by the decadent lifestyle which D'Annunzio had invented for himself (over-decorated grand houses, debts, champagne and haughtiness), by the abundance of his mistresses, by his sexual appetite, which had not been dissimilar to his own.' The more Adeline saw of D'Annunzio with violets at the feet of her married cousin, Orietta Borromeo, the more convinced she became that his Fascist Nationalism would lead to war, as inevitably as the opulent life-style with champagne parties for hundreds at Orietta's great houses, led D'Annunzio into crippling debt and eventually drove a relatively-impooverished Orietta herself back to her family home in Rome, as a tenant in

the Palazzo Doria. This arrangement upset a lot of people, particularly as it could have been avoided altogether if Orietta's son Manole had become a millionaire by becoming yet another of Barbara Hutton's husband, which in the end he failed to do.

Nevertheless, Adeline, having married the far-from-millionaire diplomat, Elmo de la Feld, was glad of free hospitality as she drove from Rome via Orietta in the Palazzo Borromeo to visit Filippo at his Swiss sanatorium. And then, when widowed, Adeline took her lover-politician to her bedroom at small inns such as the Zum Kreuz at Gächlingen which Adeline recalled defiantly in *My Zapiski*. Bad health had prevented Lonsdale Bryans from entering the diplomatic service, and it always pleased Adeline and Fillipo to see Lonsdale out on the mountains with his sketch-book, for he formed a vital link between the two sides of her family divided by religion. The bitterness which only differences of religion can generate, corroded the Churchill family also, when Lonsdale's erstwhile schoolfriend, Evan Tredegar, got the Pope to declare the Duke of Marlborough's marriage to Consuela Vanderbilt as 'null and void.' In addition to the rift this caused amongst the Churchills, who did not take kindly to the papal ruling which turned them at a stroke into bastards, Evan's action meant that he also lost Brendan Bracken to Winston Churchill.

Irrespective of Lonsdale Bryans's prowess as a mediator in her family's religious wars, Adeline knew he could not reconcile her with her brother Kenelm, for nothing could bring back their nephew Desmond Parsons, whom both had loved and for whose death Kenelm blamed, and never forgave Adeline for financing the trip to China where Desmond caught the mysterious disease. In revenge, Kenelm threatened to blackmail her over her lover. Adeline perhaps would have weathered the storm, but she loved her politician too much to expose him and his children to a major scandal so she made a dignified withdrawal to Canada.

Lonsdale Bryans wrote in *Blind Victory*, 'The spring of 1943 marked also the opening of formal negotiations between the anti-Fascist movements and the Crown...It is in such an atmosphere as this, red-hot and explosive, that we must view the events of July 25 - the arrest of Mussolini and the coup-d'état carried through by Marshal Badoglio in the name of the Crown.' A Committee for Assistance to Those Persecuted by Fascism was immediately set up with Filippo Doria as president, since his opposition to D'Annunzio had started in the years of his and Adeline's distant past as Filippo and Filippa.

Gaia Servadio noted, 'Umberto Morra recalled an expedition to Regina Coeli, Rome's prison; the little group had gone to collect Prince Doria at his palace - for once they had used a coach and horses, though usually they walked everywhere, cars having almost totally disappeared. An old woman

appeared in the entrance hall of the palace and Visconti, who had kept his good manners even in those times, recognized the old princess, bowed to her and offered her his seat in the coach. The group went to see the prison warden in order to obtain the liberation of the Communist and other political prisoners before the Nazis arrived.'

Lonsdale Bryans's familiarity with the Italian political scene over thirty years came largely through Casa Doria and Adeline's family. He would not have been invited to the famous party on Murano Island during the Venice summer season because his antagonism to Brendan Bracken was well-known to the host, Chips Channon MP, who only collected the very rich or famous, apart from young men from anywhere for sex.

Lonsdale wrote, 'But, when the crucial moment came in Italy in 1943, Mr Winston Churchill, on his own admission, knew "little to nothing" about Marshal Badoglio and his new regime! If all the many contacts, official and unofficial, that we must have built up with Italy had been kept open - or if I, for one, had been permitted to maintain my liaison with Pirzio-Biroli, Mr Churchill would have been able to tell the world that he knew "much, to everything", about the new political volcano whose eruption overwhelmed the Impero Fascista. The difference that this knowledge would have made to our campaign in that theatre of war, and in fact to the whole course of the war in general, must be evident to all.'

It was evident to many that the Hess papers about the missions Lonsdale Bryans carried out for the German Resistance run by Baron von Hassell and Detalmo Pirzio-Biroli, would have to be embargoed until AD 2017 in a massive cover-up. One of the prosecution counsel at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials, who later became Lord Chancellor Elwyn Jones, is dead, but not all those with whom I discussed the Hess story, as the written evidence before Mr Justice Jupp's court revealed.

Knowing Adeline de la Feld's nephews from his Eton days, James Lees-Milne not only wrote about them and their sister Bridget Parsons and their mother many times in his published diaries, describing them and their homes in England and Ireland where he stayed with them, but after the war he met Prince Doria and the prince's sister Orietta Borromeo and recorded his visits to their Italian palaces. On 9 October 1987 Lees-Milne wrote to me, 'I do remember Aunt Ad...but I did not know her.' Lees-Milne tells of his 1945 visit to the Palazzo Doria when he thought Prince Doria 'so exceedingly polite and smiling that I deduce he shuns intimacies.' Quite right.

Adeline and Filippo regarded their family lives as shattered, not by the curse of the Hope diamonds, but by the intimacies with another author, Gabriele D'Annunzio in the days of their youthful rebellion as Filippo-and-Filippa against damn Family Places. Her handsome prince partner not only

thrilled Adeline in the ballroom but people admired them as a celebrated pair of ice-skaters doing graceful figures-of-eight at the winter resorts. Adeline regretted never having learnt to swim and when she was 87 years old asked me to teach her, which I duly did. How proud Adeline had been to watch the athletic Filippo in his rowing crew at Cambridge until an accident turned him into a figure 'rather bent from the waist like an old apple tree' as James Lees-Milne described him.

In many people's view, but particularly in D'Annunzio's, Adeline had been a fool to reject such a choice Family Place as the Villa Pamphilij, and nobody talked of incest after D'Annunzio started taking bunches of violets to Palazzo Borromeo for the former Orietta Doria whose mother had borne him Gianettino. With heavy heart Adeline recalled the happy days at Clumber and Cambridge when Filippo attracted her physically. Had so much unhappiness resulted from revulsion at her cousin's limbs twisted like an old apple tree, so that she refused his offer of marriage? It was she, not Filippo, who had spurned D'Annunzio's advances and who had upset the Father of Fascism by translating an author D'Annunzio despised. Adeline was safe in Canada when Mussolini sent his troops to storm the Palazzo Doria and Filippo went into hiding and led the Resistance Movement so useful to Lonsdale Bryans.

During the five years Adeline spent in England during the 1950s, she and I visited her family's homes and she also kept up with old Russian friends such as Catherine Devilliers and Boris Anrep and met them at my flat. But Adeline did not want to visit More House in Chelsea, in spite of Clumber relics kept there which she had known in childhood. She thought such a visit would be fraught with tension over religious differences, because the owner of More House, Felix Hope-Nicholson together with his mother, had become Catholic converts during the war, much, of course, to Evan Tredegar's delight. Their conversion occurred before I arrived in South Wales, where I saw Adeline's Catholic-convert sister Flo, Mrs Vaughan, tormented by Dennis Parry, and before I was able to unite Adeline and Flo after 40 years of separation caused by their religious incompatibility.

Adeline also avoided More House because her nephews' fellow-Etonian Brian Howard liked to take his boyfriends there and Felix's sister, Marie-Jacqueline Lancaster, was the author of Howard's biography. Mrs Lancaster also wrote her brother's obituary in *The Independent*, starting, 'Felix Hope-Nicholson was one of Chelsea's last eccentrics and proud of it. When accused of raising the sin of snobbery to an art form by his younger sibling - myself - he took it as a compliment, for genealogy was his consuming interest and where others might have the Bible or their favourite book of poems by their bedside, he would give place of honour on his sofa to the current "Peerage", in which he was proud to appear under the cadet branch of

the Linlithgow Hopetoun banner...he was christened Charles Felix Otho Victor Gabriel John Adrian Hope-Nicholson but he was always called Felix. His adolescence was unconventional in that while still a schoolboy at Eton in 1937 our parents separated, largely over the question of his upbringing, and he remained to reign supreme with his over-indulgent "Mamma" in her ancestral home - More House, 52 Tite Street...After his mother's death in 1972 Felix assumed the mantle of Keeper of the Archives. He lived for social life (with a capital "S")...

Adeline thought Felix utterly contemptible as he lounged languidly on the magnificent studio's sofa with the latest copy of the peerage, but her cousin, Orietta Borromeo, adored the self-appointed keeper of the Hope archives and used his passion for genealogy in her process of weeding-out people she regarded as social upstarts, such as Susan Armstrong-Jones who, as a schoolgirl, called the elderly Countess Borromeo 'Darling Orietta', a point noted by James Lees-Milne in his diary. Certainly after Susan succeeded Adeline's sister as Viscountess de Vesci, Adeline never stayed at Abbey Leix again.

The Irish barrister, Montgomery Hyde, frequented More House during 50 years, and it had been the Hope-Nicholsons who introduced him to future and titled employers. Felix's grandfather, Adrian Hope, had become guardian of Oscar Wilde's two sons when the playwright went to Reading Gaol, and so when Montgomery Hyde worked on his books about the Wilde circle, he naturally wanted to consult people such as Adeline and her Aunt Newcastle, Oscar Wilde's 'My duchess,' who had known Wilde in his heyday. Adeline respected writers of objective history, if such a thing exists, and accepted the fact that her banker ancestor, Thomas Hope, had financed the wars of the Dutch House of Orange, the repercussions of which persist into the 1990s and probably beyond. But she regarded as irrelevant, if not actually mischievous, Montgomery Hyde's claims that William III, Ulster's hero of the crucial Battle of the Boyne, was homosexual. As a barrister, Montgomery Hyde combed the High Court records for the homosexual charges about Adeline's relations and friends, but she refused to meet the author because of his intimate connection with the More House clique which had Brian Howard as the 'rotten one' and the high camp Felix Hope-Nicholson as the keeper of the archives.

During the Channel 4 television programme in 1988 Montgomery Hyde, an ex-member of MI6, and I sat next to each other to talk about wartime resistance movements he had worked with. We had eaten together beforehand and decided that our television debate should include the extraordinary fact that even though crippled and in hiding, Prince Doria organised Italian anti-Fascists.

Montgomery Hyde knew of the outrage caused by **The Curve of Fate**, Lonsdale Bryans's 1941 book about the possibility of mankind destroying itself. When the Americans ended the war in the East by atomic bombs on Japan, Lonsdale's critics realised he had more scientific knowledge than was deemed good for public consumption in 1941. As we sat in front of Channel 4 television cameras, Montgomery Hyde got into stride about his friend Prince Doria and then **The Lobster** magazine editor Robin Ramsey asked me about the Hugh Dalton war diaries and mentioned having seen copies of my letters to Dalton's colleagues. I was hardly surprised when Montgomery Hyde phoned me later about the threat of a High Court writ. I went through all relevant letters I had received from the person threatening Channel 4 and myself with a libel writ, and found that every letter referred to Robin Maugham in the war years.

While lawyers chewed over the whole matter I checked up with Robin Maugham's sister, Diana Marr-Johnston about Robin's visits to the Churchills at 10 Downing Street during the war and also to Baroness Budberg's salon. Robin and Diana's father, Lord Maugham, had been Lord Chancellor and nearly as conceited about literature as his novelist brother Willie, Somerset Maugham, who never lost an opportunity to inform his hearers that he was 'the greatest living writer of English.' Fans referred to T S Eliot as 'The G L P' - Greatest Living Poet.

Willie Maugham's cloak-and-dagger experiences in First World War intelligence became the Ashenden television series in 1991, but Bruce Lockhart's **Memoirs of a British Agent** first came out in 1932 before being filmed complete with the passion he felt for his fellow-prisoner, Moura Budberg, waiting to be shot on Lenin's orders. But Lenin and then Stalin allowed Moura to enjoy the sex and drinking as long as she remained a Red spy while serving Somerset Maugham and his nephew Robin the information put to me in the Channel 4 programme.

Judith Thuman's biography of Karen Blixen records that Moura Budberg 'felt a profound attraction' for the 'being' of the Danish authoress. In 1961 Fabers sent Baroness Blixen a complimentary copy of my book **Danish Episode** in which I described my friendship with the writer of **Out of Africa**, one of whose main characters, Berkeley Cole, came from Co Fermanagh where his nephew, Michael Cole, often came to Granshagh farm for a bowl of rice pudding at night to avoid his step-mother, the Countess of Enniskillen.

Danish Episode's photograph of Karen Blixen, which she specially asked me to use, was reproduced elsewhere in reviews of my book, and this seemed to have upset Robin Maugham for he claimed to have been a much closer friend of the Danish authoress, which he probably was. In the following year, 1962, the Cheltenham Festival mounted an exhibition 'Portraits of

Living Writers,' and its 67 exhibits included three of Somerset Maugham and three of T S Eliot, none of Robin Maugham but one of me. This upset Robin again. I thought him silly about it, after all he had been in Morocco with both Mr and Mrs Eliot when he was nearly killed in the Agadir earthquake, but Eliot's firm had asked me rather than Maugham to write the book on Morocco. By the time Robin eventually got down to writing his own book about Morocco our relationship had deteriorated to the non-speaking point where he got his collaborator, Derek Peel, to send me questions about things Robin's alcohol-fuddled memory had forgotten, questions which T S Eliot could not answer since he was dead by then.

Of all my books, Robin Maugham talked most about **The Protege** for he had met the three Mills brothers in Holy Orders before I was born, and whereas I wrote about Frank Shelley-Mills who liked to be flogged, Robin's memoirs recorded that it was Canon Willie Mills who liked to do the flogging. By 1970, the Maughams' connection with Karen Blixen had become legendary through the former Lord Chancellor. One evening at the Savile Club people had been discussing how the Danish baroness caught the syphilis which eventually killed her. Lord Maugham, who knew Karen from Moura Budberg's parties, kept interrupting John Davenport who claimed to be her relation, so John removed the club's clock, picked up the diminutive former Lord Chancellor and placing him on the mantelpiece said, 'You look like a clock little man, so sit there like a clock and tick-tock away.'

On 22 November 1991 I read the **Daily Telegraph**, 'The police are investigating the disappearance of 24 volumes of intimate diaries from the Chelsea home of Diana Marr-Johnston, niece of Somerset Maugham. The diaries belonged to her late brother Robin, the second Viscount Maugham, an author, who died in 1981. There are suggestions that the diaries may have been destroyed to prevent publication of details about Robin Maugham's homosexual love affairs and his connection with the intelligence services...Maugham was only following in a family tradition - Somerset Maugham had notoriously exotic sexual tastes.'

In 1988 I sent the spy-catcher Richard Deacon a list of Robin Maugham's friends including one who could not be interviewed because he had disappeared after a brutal double murder and arson to conceal the carnage. Maugham had a home base in Brighton and mingled in George Kinnaird's entourage there in much the same way as Robin had frequented Peter Churchill's restaurants in Morocco and London. Robin liked to claim that he had been the marriage broker when his ex-lover, the 23rd Baron Audley, badly needed money and so married Sarah Churchill.

Viscount Maugham with Lord and Lady Audley are well summed up in **April Ashley's Odyssey** where the former seaman-turned-female-model

tells how she went to Robin's house on Ibiza so that he could write her life story. Being Robin he demanded, of course, full details of the sex-change operation and she, being April, told him, 'Mind your own bloody business.' He flew into a tantrum, 'I'm the Viscount Maugham! How dare you **speak** to me like that!' It is almost the same story told in the same book about Francis Rose shouting in April's restaurant, 'Don't you realise I'm the Fourth Baronet! My mother was the daughter of a French count.'

Francis Rose wrote in **Saying Life** about family disagreements concerning his schooling, 'The final outcome of this drawn-out row was that my trustees suggested that Frederick Maugham, later Lord Chancellor and brother of Somerset Maugham, should be asked to be my guardian. For once Mother and Granny agreed, and he, little imagining what a nightmare I was to prove to him, agreed.' The burglar who climbed a drainpipe to steal the 24 volumes of Robin Maugham's intimate diaries perhaps knew what nightmare the author had made of so many young men's lives, though Maugham was also trained as a barrister and would hardly have given intimate details of those murders and suicides Cecil Beaton connected Francis Rose with.

This was the world of snobbery and vengeance that Adeline de la Feld thought so despicable, the world personified by Robin Maugham's fellow-Etonian Felix Hope-Nicholson stretching back on his sofa, flicking over the page of a peerage, the world exchanged by the Rodneys in 1919 for a tent on the Prairies at -30 degree F. It was a world I discovered as a child evacuee in the Fermanagh countryside when I lived in a house built with stone from the ruins of Nixon Hall, and through that, when Lonsdale Bryans met up with the Nixons later, I got the job as housemaster at Canada's Shawnigan Lake School started by Christopher Lonsdale who engaged me for two years to replace Ned Larsen who had gone to Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar before returning to become headmaster.

One of the family's many parsons had a son, Christopher Lonsdale, who was obliged to leave England and seek his fortune in the wilds of Vancouver Island. He deeply resented having to take a horse and cart selling milk to the grand houses of those who had already made their fortune during the Cariboo gold rush of the 1850s. More singular than most among those singular gold-diggers was another clergyman's son, Robert Beaven, from Leigh in Staffordshire. From 1878 to 1882 Beaven served as British Columbia's Minister of Finance, and then became the province's Prime Minister.

Robert Beaven thought his parsonage upbringing placed him above lesser mortals and soon **The Daily Colonist** reported that he 'roared across the chamber at his opponents, "You are a lot of low vagabonds".' Christopher Lonsdale also regarded his parsonage upbringing as a status symbol and one not only worthy of his many highly-placed relations but also one in no way

tarnished by his hopefully-temporary indignity of doling out pints of milk in often-wet streets before retiring to cheap digs with low vagabonds. However, fortune was not far off and having got Robert Beaven's sympathetic ear, he started 'The Eton of Canada' in 1913 on the shores of Shawnigan Lake, Vancouver Island, 30 miles north of Victoria.

Shortly before I went to Canada, **The Daily Colonist** printed Robert Beaven's life story, concluding it with a reference to Peter Churchill's marriage to Beaven's daughter 'K.' The newspaper noted, 'Mrs Beaven died in 1919 and Mr Beaven the next year. The only daughter, Kathleen, in 1901 married a young naval officer whom she met at a ball, Capt. Stanley Venn Ellis. They went to England to live and she was left a widow. In 1916 she was married to Hon. Victor Alexander Spencer, who later became Viscount Churchill, and she his Viscountess. Her coronation robe, which she wore to the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth is now in the Provincial Archives. It had been worn to two previous coronations - those of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra and King George V and Queen Mary. Kathleen, Viscountess Churchill, died in 1943 at her home in Bath, England. One of the two sons, William died in young manhood, and Hugo in 1937. He married a daughter of J.D. Pemberton, first surveyor-general of the Crown Colony of Vancouver Island. Mrs Beaven lives at "Arden" on Beach Drive. The story of Robert Beaven is typical of early life in this city. His is one of the important names of British Columbia history.'

When Adeline sailed into Victoria harbour in the autumn of 1950, I took the bus from Shawnigan Lake into town and with Mrs Beaven's nephew, Cuthbert Holmes, went to meet Adeline and took her to stay at Arden with the old Irish saying 'Cead Mille Failte' - 'A Hundred Thousand Welcomes to You' carved into the fireplace.

Cuthbert Holmes and Lonsdale Bryans had both been to Balliol College and both were proud of their Irish background so that they spent vacations with their Ulster relations. Cuthbert, being the nephew of one of the future Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke's wives, went to Brookeborough in Co Fermanagh as did Uncle George Brooke whose wife Adela was the daughter of Lord Charles Pelham-Clinton, one of the Newcastle trustees who controlled Adeline's family allowance. Of her 1920 marriage at Clumber and refusal to go to her husband's house in Italy, Adeline wrote, 'I could not bear the thought of all severance between myself and my Parsons nephews and niece', but that was not the complete story.

She also told in **My Zapiski** of visits to Filippo Doria in his Swiss sanatorium in the company of her political lover, Jamie, 'Time was running short, and so were funds, and I must return to London. Jamie and I decided to spend a night at Gächlingen, where I would take the same room at the Zum

Kreuz and he would accompany me as far as Zurich, where I would take the train to London. We drove away in a cab, and two or three guests standing outside the inn waved to us with friendly smiles. Perhaps they felt life at the Zum Kreuz would be duller without us.'

In 1920 the widowed Countess of Rosse married Lord de Vesci and went off to his estates in England and Ireland leaving her three school-age children for much of the time to their Aunt Ad at Birr Castle and Womersley Park. Adeline revelled in this arrangement because it drew her close to the youngest Parsons child, the 10 year-old Desmond on whom she doted, as did her brother Kenelm. Her lover Jamie had a son of the same age who became friends with Desmond for as soon as Filippo Doria married his Scottish nurse, Adeline no longer had the expense of hotel bills in Switzerland and Jamie and his young son loved the romantic Birr Castle where Adeline held court in spite of rebellious years of preaching against damn Family Places.

The Duke of Connaught retired as Governor General of Canada in 1916, by which time Commander Nixon had his Naval College to run while Christopher Lonsdale had started his school at Shawnigan Lake with Mrs Norris as its housekeeper and his mistress. Like Cuthbert Holmes, Mrs Norris liked to return to her family in Ireland, but since Nixon Hall had long been a ruin she went to Birr where she had been brought up in her father's local rectory. Trying to put his Victoria milk-float behind him, Christopher Lonsdale delighted to don his dinner jacket and accompany his housekeeper to dine at Birr Castle especially if such members of the royal family as he had met with the Connaughts were present. When Jamie proposed that he and Adeline should elope they were grateful for Lonsdale's offer of jobs teaching languages at Shawnigan Lake School. But as Adeline wrote in *My Zapiski*, she thought only of the hurt to Jamie's children whom she loved.

Meanwhile Bridget Parsons had made herself independent in London and through her friend, Daphne Vivian, became part of the circle around two Americans, Chips Channon and Brian Howard who had been at Eton and Oxford with Bridget's brother Michael Rosse. After her final escape as a young woman from the damn Family Place at Denby Grange, Adeline, spurned many conventions of behaviour as shown by her choice of a married man as a lover and by her toleration of homosexuality which had forced a number of relations to flee the country. But she did not approve of the rampant homosexual promiscuity indulged by the two Americans with its inevitable result in frequent bouts of venereal disease betrayed in public by the fact that the butler could not serve them wine. Their abandon and what she saw as abuse of sex alarmed Adeline who only shared her bed with one lover in 18 years and never before or after with anyone else. Chips Channon horrified her by trying to outdo even Evan Tredegar in entertaining members of the royal

family in unusual ways. Only in 1991, long after Adeline was dead, did the *Evening Standard*, under the headline, 'Diaries show Chips with everyone,' tell of the many male beds the Duke of Kent slept in and his arrest at the homosexual club called the Nut House.

Adeline had refused to elope with Jamie in 1920, but circumstances at Birr Castle changed dramatically when her nephew Michael Rosse married the divorcee Mrs Anne Armstrong-Jones in 1935 who so became chatelaine at Birr and Womersley. Two years later Desmond Parsons died and Adeline went to Canada and made her home near the Rodneys' pig-farm in Alberta from which she uprooted herself to be near me and her relation Diana Pelham whom I intended marrying.

Headmaster Christopher Lonsdale ran Shawnigan Lake School in the strict Anglican tradition of his father's church, being both the Scripture Master and a lay preacher. His wife left him over the relationship with the housekeeper, Mrs Norris, which then became apparent to the rich parents who consequently sought another boarding school elsewhere. They had no difficulty because in 1923 Cuthbert Holmes had become the co-founder of Brentwood College. In his history of Vancouver Island Professor SW Jackman wrote, 'Not very far distant, on Mill Bay, is Brentwood College with a similar enrolment to Shawnigan Lake...Brentwood and Shawnigan Lake are great rivals - insular versions of Eton and Harrow in this respect - with rugby and cricket matches being the outward manifestations of the sentiment.'

Adeline de la Feld had already visited Victoria before joining me in 1950 and enthused over the Rockies seen from the observation coach as the train snaked through valleys beneath the rearing peaks. I found she had not exaggerated about the mountains, but to me the steamer journey in brilliant September sunshine between the smaller islands to Vancouver Island itself seemed more beautiful because more idyllic. The clear air and bright light showed Shawnigan Lake and its surrounding firs in every detail with that dreamlike perfection of Surrealist art. The motionless, amber water made me feel guilty as though my first dive into it shattered a mirror. What is known as the world's greatest 'stand' of timber, encircled the lake, though 'stand' hardly described this primeval forest where penetration was impossible except by main roads because the seven-foot thick trunks lay in every stage of decay, felled by storms and old age and left to pile on top of each other undisturbed by the Indian hunters through thousands of years, though acres of black-scarred stumps told the story of forest fires that scourge Vancouver Island.

Many fellers travelled in the bus with me from Victoria, and they were far-from-legendary lumberjacks who could shave themselves with their axes. But the mighty Douglas firs and hemlocks still standing like cathedral piers

250 feet high after ten centuries were destined to be towed in rafts by Indians on boom-scooters down the tide waters to Port Albert and not by me. By nature I was better suited to being a log-roller spending a winter in a windowless bunkhouse on baked beans and salt pork than I was to being a housemaster at Shawnigan Lake School that was sited so elegantly on the lake shores where the faintly Elizabethan half-timbered buildings were separated by lawns and walks, shrubberies and rockeries. Beyond the main school buildings, and at discreet distances from each other, stood the timber-framed houses for married masters, and it was a great surprise when Christopher Lonsdale showed me the largest and best of these and asked, 'When can we expect the Lady Diana to arrive?' Within an hour of arrival I understood why the Rodneys had refused to send their sons to this 'Eton of Canada' and had tried to stop me from joining the staff.

Two large and savage alsatians followed 'The Head' at his heels as Lonsdale liked to be called and as indeed he signed himself. The Head used his dogs and the rod to instil good manners and scholarship. And when the prefects did not whack offenders bottoms hard enough in the gymnasium then the 'defaulters' lined up after supper outside Lonsdale's study so he could complete the job. The gratification of this kind of sadism notwithstanding, Lonsdale had been acknowledged over the years as an influential educator by the American as well as the Canadian press. *Time* magazine focused attention on his learn-or-be-flogged system and no-one derived more satisfaction than The Head on seeing a photograph of himself with his dogs in the magazine under the headline 'Happiness and a Hickory Stick.'

Some people, however, while agreeing Lonsdale wielded influence, believed it was bad rather than good. When these dissenting opinions got into print Lonsdale was far from annoyed, even when some of the old boys who had endured the awful beatings publicly declared the Head's educational system to be nothing more than barbaric. Some of these former pupils had become distinguished scholars, in spite of rather than because of the system, among them a notable scientist who gave an interview to *Time* expressing a professional opinion about unfortunate boys running away from the school and having the bloodthirsty alsatians set on them. In an age so decadent as to equate notoriety with good, and to see anonymity as a crime worse than poverty, it was inevitable that all the publicity proved to be fortunate for Shawnigan Lake School. Wealthy Americans who might otherwise never have heard of the school, now read of it in *Time* and had no hesitation in sending their sons to be educated by this man's man whose hunting trophies of animals' heads lined the school walls and whose rifle-range was always packed whereas I got two boys to attend my first Beethoven concert.

From the outset in 1913, Christopher Lonsdale aimed to make his

school the Eton of Canada and even more so after Cuthbert Holmes co-founded the Harrow of Canada nearby in 1923. Lonsdale was deeply disappointed that the ex-Etonian Lord Rodney did not send his three sons to Shawnigan Lake and since Lonsdale himself had been to Westminster School, he had to show that the Lonsdales had usually been educated at Eton for centuries. The rich American parents of his boys needed to be impressed and the Old Etonian at the British Embassy in Washington who did the impressing so well was the Earl of Halifax.

In 1991 the Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd wrote in the *Daily Telegraph*, 'Andrew Roberts's *The Holy Fox: A Biography of Lord Halifax* concentrates on Halifax's time as Foreign Secretary. Roberts portrays a man without extraordinary gifts, in office at an extraordinary time, who abandoned appeasement rather earlier than is supposed and voluntarily renounced the premiership in May 1940 to the great benefit of us all.' Instead of going to 10 Downing Street, Halifax went to the British Embassy in Washington to the great benefit of Christopher Lonsdale's friends.

The holy fox is an apt title for a biography about the head of the Wood family who took his title Halifax from the family's Yorkshire background, the Rev Henry Wood having the remainder to his brother Sir Francis Wood, the 1st Baronet of Barnsley in 1784. The Rev John Lonsdale, vicar of Darfield, near Barnsley, had a son called John on 17 January 1788 who went to Eton before becoming a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. Elected Christian Advocate in 1821, the Rev John Lonsdale gave unusual discourses before the university such as, '*The Testimonies of Nature, Reason, and Revelation respecting Future Judgements*' which did not stop him becoming Bishop of Lichfield in 1843. Bishop Lonsdale's great-grandson, Lonsdale Bryans, certainly caused many in Winston Churchill's government concern when in 1941 he published his revelations respecting future judgement in *The Curve of Fate*.

By then Lord Halifax was British Ambassador in Washington winning and dining the rich parents of boys from Christopher Lonsdale's Shawnigan Lake School. Two of these boys were seniors by the time I became their housemaster in 1950 and they invited me to Washington for the school holidays. Another Old Etonian then on the embassy staff who knew Lonsdale Bryans and his friend Peter Churchill from the old days in Berlin, was Guy Burgess. Many people opposed Peter Churchill's 1949 marriage to Joan Black of Belfast as he later wrote in *All My Sins Remembered*. It was not so much a marriage as a transaction but they both agreed to it so no harm was done, Joan having money but no title and Peter the reverse, and by bartering his title for Joan's coal-money Peter, for once, behaved like many of his fellow-peers.

Joan was not a lesbian as Peter's first wife K Beaven from Victoria had been and whom Peter married to oblige his mother with a cover-up for her lesbianism and also to calm troubled waters at Buckingham Palace where Peter had been more than chief Page of Honour to his cousin King Edward VII. Indeed, Queen Mary blamed Peter for the bad habits that beset her son Eddie, known as Prince George, Duke of Kent whom Bridget Parsons would have married had Kent not possessed Peter's habits. But Guy Burgess knew as most people knew in that Anthony Blunt-royal family circle that even Mrs Winston Churchill could not resist falling in love with a well-known homosexual man. Unlike her daughter Sarah who actually married the gay Lord Audley, Mrs Churchill left her husband and children only temporarily in order to be with one of Evan Tredegar's male lovers on a long yachting holiday in the East, as revealed in 1991 by John Pearson's book about the Churchill family.

For the first few months at Shawnigan Lake I tried hard to endure Headmaster Lonsdale's preoccupation with the peerage to back his claims of running the Eton of Canada, for I found Mrs Norris exceptionally engaging. Although she had retired as the school housekeeper she still kept her sitting-room there as nobody had replaced her, the boys being looked after by matrons and fed by a Chinese catering team whom Lonsdale thought should learn English with the aim of getting Canadian citizenship. When one got drunk and could not answer the court in English, the Chinaman was taken to task by Lonsdale's alsatians.

Although Princess Patricia of Connaught had become Lady Ramsay on her marriage in 1919 to Captain Ramsay, the friend and fellow-officer of Mrs Norris's brother, Commander Nixon, the streets of Canada were full of soldiers proud to wear the uniform of Princess Pat's Regiment, and Mrs Norris equally proudly lined the walls of her sitting-room with the admittedly-gloomy woodscapes painted by the princess. Mrs Norris had come down from her up-island home to welcome me and take me to other people with Co Fermanagh interests such as Christy Graham, the nephew and namesake of Christy Graham, the land-steward of Lisgoole Abbey who built Granshagh Farm where I went in 1941 as a wartime evacuee. Young Christy was born in Ontario in 1868 and worked as a railroad engineer on the Canadian National Railway where Dr Alex Bryans was the company's medical consultant and who went with his still-living son Fred Bryans to search out his relations, including me, in Ulster. For many years Fred was Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of British Columbia where so many Shawnigan Lake boys went.

Christopher Lonsdale accompanied Mrs Norris on her visits to Ireland and since he was a well-known 'crack' gunman, he had no doubt been one of

Major Nixon's shooting-party guests that took in Granshagh Farm where Headmaster Lonsdale would have joined in the refreshments made by Lizzie Graham who knew Mrs Norris from childhood and relished my story of Mrs Norris's visits to the farm in **Quality Tea** published by Fabers in 1961.

The headmaster's temper could always be gauged by the amount of gin he offered staff calling at his study. For a time he offered me his own large measures while Mrs Norris and I talked about her family history at Nixon Hall in Fermanagh and how Alan Price had seemed determined to bring about her family's downfall. Then one day Headmaster Lonsdale called me to his study but offered me no gin. I had not even sat down when he growled, 'You know bloody well we've met before.' Adeline de la Feld's arrival and stay with the aunt of his rival, Cuthbert Holmes, co-founder of the Harrow of Canada, had raised a number of questions.

Diana Pelham's aunt and uncle, the Colmans, had talked to Adeline in Alberta about my buying a farm in the province and Adeline had told them she would keep an eye on Diana and me in buying a property since Alberta was notorious for real-estate sharks. Adeline wrote in **My Zapiski**, 'There can be very little doubt that the concept of "honesty" does not enter the mind of some politicians. Every now and again a casual report appears about some case of bribery, such as that of Raymond Bruneau, a former MP. Convicted of corruptly accepting a bribe while he was an MP he was given a two years suspended sentence (i.e. a judicial slap on the wrist.) The judge rejected a Crown request for a jail sentence saying it would be a gratuitous insult to MP's and legislative members, because it would indicate a need for a deterrent against political bribery. In view of the judicial gospel announced in this case, are citizens to assume that all, or most of many places of real estate, and of other things sold to the Government also undergo very sudden inflation in price prior to their purchase by the Government, and much to the personal profit of some MPs? Perhaps the judge in this case is merely recognising and giving voice to a new widely accepted principle of public morality. Certainly all parts of our country have been splattered in recent months and years with incidents of political conduct shocking to most ordinary citizens. But is conduct which would jail a private businessman to be accepted as the political norm?'

So Adeline intended to save Diana Pelham and me from falling into any such real-estate trap. When I found that farm land had been taken over by oil wells creating a boom in Alberta it naturally pleased me when Headmaster Lonsdale offered me a job plus a house to which I could take Diana. I thought the Rodneys did not so much object at my going to Shawnigan Lake as that Adeline abruptly followed me. She disliked the Social Credit Party founded by Bible Bill Aberhart of the Prophetic Bible Institute, and she spent years in

the law courts helping non-English-speaking Ukrainians against Bible Bill's politicians. She was in her 70th year when I went to Shawnigan Lake and longed to settle in old age on Vancouver Island.

When Adeline promptly turned up after my arrival at his school, Headmaster Lonsdale leapt to the conclusion that the old lady must be my mother and that therefore I was not who I claimed to be, namely a Bryans, but one of the young boys he had seen at Birr Castle in Ireland with Adeline and her lover Jamie around 1930, which would have fitted my age. It had been even before then that Jamie and Adeline considered elopement while the offer of jobs at Shawnigan Lake made it a strong possibility, she to teach French and Jamie to teach Latin.

Now, in 1951, Adeline was staying with Mrs Beaven at the famous Arden, while as recently as 1948 *The Daily Colonist* regaled its readers with Arden's history, telling them of the sister-in-law Viscountess Churchill's coronation robes being solemnly kept in the Parliament Building as a relic of the great Beaven family. Now Headmaster Lonsdale had from Washington the indisputable facts that Peter Churchill had entered a business agreement with his mother's lesbian lover, K Beaven, for a marriage Peter could not consummate, even if such a thing had been necessary to produce an heir, since there was a very young step-brother, the present Viscount Churchill, whom Peter had never seen until 1973 when at my suggestion the two step-brothers met because Peter was dying.

As Guy Burgess, the 2nd Secretary at the British Embassy in Washington, intended, these revelations together with those about Adeline whom he had always called 'The Red Countess' and her Communist publications, badly shocked Victoria society after Lonsdale put them around, having at last got ammunition to embarrass the Harrow of Canada's co-founder Cuthbert Holmes, nephew of the lesbian Viscountess Churchill, nee K Beaven, who put her head in a gas-oven when her mother-in-law/lover died.

Adeline felt guilty about it all. Had she been wrong to fight for liberation in general and women's in particular by espousing such causes as Futurism? Votes for women seemed just and right, as did women having control over their own money, and the right to determine their own sexual behaviour. But a disaster such as K Beaven's gave Adeline pause for thought, even if not for long.

Peter Churchill wrote of his boyhood in *All My Sins Remembered*, 'Politics were always being discussed at Rolleston and politics also sounded like a private family matter. Those were the days when the suffragettes were after Winston. One of them had beaten him over the head with an umbrella, and there was another who went to his political meetings with a big bell, and

rang it whenever he started to speak, and went on ringing it so that no one could hear what Winston said. "Why don't they want Winston to talk?" I asked my mother, "Because they want him to say that women should have the vote?" I asked my mother, "But why can't women have the vote?" Votes for women was a hot subject at Rolleston. Soon, on the other side of the family, a cousin of my mother's, James Lowther, who was Speaker of the House of Commons, helped to bring the vote to women.'

I had known Guy Burgess in the war when he was supposed to be helping Dil de Rohan and others at the Ministry of Information, although he and Brian Howard seemed to spend most of their time chasing soldiers and sailors. Adeline had met Howard during his first year at Eton with her nephew Michael Rosse and she soon realised Howard was 'the rotten one' urging Nancy Cunard to publish open-letters such as *Black Man and White Ladyship*. But Nancy's neighbour in the village of Réanville was Joan Black and in 1949 Peter Churchill persuaded Joan to give up her French farmhouse and marry him. In London, Joan met her Belfast friend Una O'Connor the actress with a number of successes in London and Hollywood where fame and fortune already smiled on Joan's brother-in-law, John Huston. Guy Burgess was delighted so many old friends were returning to the United States and we both intended to stay on the Churchills' ex-navy minesweeper on the Californian coast.

But if Guy liked to keep up with those rising stars of stage and screen he also enjoyed more their scandals off stage or screen. In Washington, as an increasingly drunken diplomat with the British Embassy, Guy commanded the dinner-tables of parents whose sons I knew at Shawnigan Lake, parents with wealth and political influence who went up to Vancouver Island to see the school's plays which I both produced and acted in. So they listened agog as Guy Burgess told them the story behind *The House on the Sand* in London. Headmaster Lonsdale showed his displeasure at my link with such a reprehensible play, and also at what Guy said was my real reason for coming to Canada, namely to escape the wrath of Billy Gruffydd whose girlfriend was the mother of my son. Guy Burgess talked more to outrage than to amuse and he certainly made my position at Shawnigan Lake School untenable and Adeline's presence in Victoria embarrassing to her. Rather than compromise, Adeline and I left Canada altogether.

The Victoria dust settled sufficiently for Adeline to return there in 1953 after a final quarrel with her aunt, the Duchess of Newcastle, at Forest Farm. Adeline had made good friends among Victoria people in the Cuthbert Holmes group and was genuinely loved by such people as John and Dagmar Nation, and by Dagmar's parents and children. They welcomed her back in 1953 and myself in 1966, and perhaps there, far from damn Family Places,

Adeline felt at home. She lived among them for another twenty years.

Twice a year we would go to Island Hall, a motel north of Shannigan Lake to work on manuscripts. On our second visit the young swimming-pool attendant watched me helping the 87 year-old Adeline to swim, and while I went to make a telephone call he saw Adeline with a small tyre at the deep end, then rushed up to me, 'Do you know where I found your mother?' By now Adeline had sold her Hope diamonds and more than Christie's and Lloyd's Bank thought she was my mother.

At Chips Channon's 1932 party in Venice for Diana Cooper's 40th birthday party, Brendan Bracken chased Randolph Churchill for calling him 'brother.' Because Bracken had so vigorously denied his Irish parentage for so many years, I wondered if he had originated the story that he was Winston's bastard. It certainly amused Diana Cooper herself to boast of being a man-about-town's daughter rather than the Duke of Rutland's.

These questions of paternity never went beyond conjecture for nobody dreamt of medical evidence such as blood samples or of confrontation in the law courts however much everyone seemed to love resort to lawyers over family property. Until I was twenty the lawyer most involved with my own family was William Fulton of Cleaver, Fulton and Rankin, and not simply because Martin Cleaver, the senior partner in the firm, had been one of my grandfather's seven young friends who left Belfast in 1898 to establish the Egypt General Mission, but also because my grandfather, Richard Bryans, and William Fulton had seen the Rev Charles Maguire off when he led another seven Protestants to the USA to explain the Unionist attitude should Home Rule be forced on Ulster. Winston Churchill's stormy 1912 visit to Belfast in support of Home Rule caused such an outcry that the venue for his meeting had to be changed while the burning question became that posed by one of Adeline de la Feld's fellow-suffragettes, 'Will you give the suffrage to women?'

William Fulton was a signatory of a letter to the **Irish Christian Advocate** opposing Churchill's support of Home Rule, and Fulton did not want the soldiers protecting Churchill to have their barracks in the Grosvenor Hall once used by the founders of the Egypt General Mission. Rather, let that same Grosvenor Hall, one of whose first full-time lay workers, William Bryans, had been appointed in 1890, welcome to its platform such holidaying missionaries from Egypt as Dr Mary Wills accompanied by the evangelical authoress, Sibella Bryans. And as I recalled in my 1963 book **Ulster**, William Fulton came to see me off too when I left Belfast in 1944 on board a troopship, a would-be missionary as yet unaware that on my arrival in Wales I would get entangled with Protestant Rudolf Hess born in Egypt and with Lonsdale Bryans chosen by the German Resistance as their peace envoy.

Although the Egypt General Mission and other evangelical societies took their legal affairs to the born-again William Robbins, the Parliamentary Agent in the Strand, anything scandalous, particularly of a homosexual nature, was taken by Mabel Wills and her friends to Robin Chester of Rankin Ford and Chester in Gray's Inn. In **Blind Victory** Lonsdale Bryans wrote, 'In the meantime I settled down to my book with the usual bachelor habit of reading at meals.' His Etonian friend, Robin Chester, also had pronounced bachelor habits but neither of them would have committed the outrage of marrying as a front for their homosexuality simply to ensure the succession of property, unlike their other Etonian friend, Evan Tredegar, who made exactly that kind of marriage because the Pope asked him to. Not that Robin Chester felt any pressure in that direction for he and his two sisters owned three estates, conveniently adjoining so that he could go hallooing about in his red hunting coat when he was not down in London's East End doing good works such as running the Boy Scouts at Toynbee Hall.

In 1929 a dockers' trade unionist spoke to the boys at Eton and Guy Burgess made himself conspicuous by attacking the capitalist system and its consequent poverty in the East End. Guy's history master, and later Eton's headmaster, Robert Birley, closely monitored Guy Burgess's school career. The brilliant young Burgess so interested Birley that the master went to Cambridge in 1931 to visit his former pupil, and later stated, 'Of course Guy wasn't in when I arrived so I entered his rooms in New Court and waited. There were many books on his shelves . . . As I expected, his taste was fairly wide and interesting. I noticed a number of Marxist tracts and textbooks, but that's not what shocked and depressed me. I realised that something must have gone terribly wrong when I came across an extraordinary array of explicit and extremely unpleasant pornographic literature.'

Guy's explicit array was probably somewhat milder than the one discovered by Queen Mary when she turned up unexpectedly during Evan Tredegar's 'Going Down Town' party with its live sex as well as photographic enlargements, an orgy which led to Evan being ostracised by the royal family for the rest of his life, and even indeed at his funeral. However, no such perils awaited Evan's schoolfriend, George Rodney, who proudly showed visiting members of Queen Mary's family his claim to fame, a framed and printed card showing him to have been the first Boy Scout at Baden Powell's camp on Brownsea Island. Adeline de la Feld's wildlife concerns led her to recruit George Rodney and me in support of her campaign over the Pacific coast island which the Canadian government gave to Princess Margaret on her wedding to Adeline's step-great-nephew, Lord Snowdon. The project for using the island as a bird sanctuary ran into trouble with students and other young people who used the island as a Garden of Eden sanctuary where they

camped at weekends smoking dope and wandering in Garden of Eden nakedness.

If Princess Margaret did not build a house on her Canadian island, she soon made headlines over another wedding present, a parcel of land on the West Indian island of Mustique given to her by her old friend Colin Tennant, Lord Glenconner, a wedding gift where the princess still spends part of the year with the international jet-set who have vied with each other over the splendour of their houses in what was a mosquito jungle when Tennant bought the island in 1957 for £45,000. Today island houses rent for \$8,500 a week. The *News of the World* did not please Princess Margaret when it published photographs of her on the beach with Roddy Llewellyn and Colin Tennant both of whom were fig-leafless like the students on her Canadian island. It was, however, Russell Miller of the *Sunday Times*, who reported the history of Mustique's social life with Princess Margaret, 'People still talk about how she laughed when the well-endowed actor John Bindon was moved to show guests the prodigious size of his endowment. Once, it has been reported, Bindon stirred his drink with his appendage.'

A recent biography of Lord Baden Powell, founder of the Boy Scouts, reveals that he collected photographs of nude boys, so proving that the young Lord Rodney and Viscount Tredegar were in experienced hands. Of all those in that pre-First World War Etonian group, the one to my knowledge who had the most enduring enthusiasm for the Scout Movement was Robin Chester. He not only spent his evenings with them at Toynbee Hall, where Clement Attlee had become Secretary in 1910, but also made a permanent camping site on his estate and took the boys to church on Sundays where the churchwarden was R A Butler who had been one of Lonsdale Bryans's chief supporters during the peace negotiations with Germany. Stephen Spender wrote in his 1960 journal, 'This is a postscript to my visit to Moscow. Shortly after my return I happened to go to a party where the then Home Secretary, R A Butler, was a guest. He came up to me and said in his urbane manner: "I hear you've seen Guy Burgess in Moscow . . . Well, if you write to him, please tell him that, as far as I'm concerned, he's perfectly free to come and go as he chooses . . . Of course, if he does come back and the Home Secretary takes no action, I'll be criticized, the press will be after me, but I'm prepared to face that".'

It seems that Butler was sincere in his attitude to Burgess who of course was not the only Old Etonian with a large and explicit array of pornographic literature. And as far as I know, Burgess never tried to use those sex photographs for blackmail, unlike another of Evan Tredegar's fellow-Etonians, Sir Kenelm Lister-Kaye, who blackmailed his sister Adeline de la Feld on discovering her affair with the married MP. Lloyd George's secretary and future countess wrote of the invitation to luncheon at 10 Downing Street to

meet 'young men of whom big things were expected.' These included Evan Tredegar and his then-close friend Brendan Bracken.

Evan started his political life as private secretary to W C Bridgeman MP, at the Ministry of Labour during the First World War. But to achieve the expected 'big things,' Evan must fight for a seat in the Commons before his inevitable translation to the Lords at his father's death. The obvious choice was the Limehouse Division of Stepney where Clement Attlee had been the MP since 1922, and Evan contested that seat for the Tories in 1929. But although Brendan Bracken won North Paddington, Evan could not budge the much admired Attlee who had been Mayor of Stepney and Secretary of Toynbee Hall. Many young working-class men in Stepney liked Evan himself as well as his money and way of life.

Attlee was a barrister who taught Social Science at the London School of Economics until he entered parliament where he joined that other barrister and fellow-teacher at the School of Economics, Hugh Dalton. Having grown up in the same royal circle as Peter Churchill who founded the Political Research Bureau for the Labour Party, Dalton knew of Peter's and Dickie Mountbatten's involvement with Evan Tredegar's circle. By 1943 Hugh Dalton and Brendan Bracken had emerged from that clique as politicians in power. And it was Dalton who showed the correspondence between himself and Brendan Bracken to Attlee who, after reading the letters, declared that Bracken 'Is not fit to be a minister in the middle of a war.' But, significantly, Dalton added in his diary, 'I think that we just don't deserve to win the war. We are all fighting each other instead of the enemy, and with such zest.'

The Old Etonians certainly could not agree over Lonsdale Bryans's mission to end the war with Germany and neither did Dalton's chief enemy, Brendan Bracken, relish Lonsdale contacting Germans that Bracken had known, but now wished he hadn't, when Bracken turned up at Tredegar Park and entered the political arena and financial press through Evan. Although remaining staunchly Tory, Evan never quarrelled with old friends of the Left such as Peter Churchill and Dickie Mountbatten. The snobbery of the Left manifested itself when Tom Driberg arrogantly wrote of his homosexual trial, 'There was no cross examination' of his character witness 'Lord Sysonby of St James's Palace.' Many thought Driberg got no more than he deserved when Dil de Rohan gave him 'one on the kisser' for mocking Lord Sysonby's relation, the lesbian Sarah Ponsonby, one of the 'Ladies of Llangollen.'

Those who were 'all fighting each other . . . with such zest,' did not belong exclusively to Brendan Bracken's Ministry of Information or to Anthony Eden's Foreign Office with Dalton. Baroness Budberg used her friendship with H G Wells to get into Tredegar Park where she picked up news for Stalin about Rudolf Hess and Evan Tredegar. Hess had gone from

Abergavenny when Evan at last got his treasures out of wartime storage and gave his first postwar party. Queen Mary was back in residence at Marlborough House and Evan's old enemy, Clement Attlee, was installed at No 10 Downing Street. When Evan fell foul of more than Queen Mary over his pornographic photographs, no prosecution followed since it was a private collection and nobody blackmailed him. Nor did the pictures get published in the *News of the World* as did those of the beach at Mustique with the nude guests of Queen Mary's granddaughter, Princess Margaret. Prime Minister Attlee trained as a lawyer and he knew that the exposure of any scandals would be as damaging to the Labour Party as to the Tories.

When photographs or letters are taken into open court they enter the public domain where the press is free to make fair comment on them, although whether the views of Ken Livingstone's press friends were fair comment was a point I put to Mr Justice French's court in 1991 after an outraged neighbour brought me a long article about me and others of my family with Lord Mountbatten. Nevertheless, some people still alive, though retired from office, did not trouble to question Livingstone's allegations in or out of the House of Commons.

Morley Kennerley was more than a little surprised when his 10 July 1963 confidential note to Charles Monteith about Fabers 'certainly do not want to lose' me as one of their authors, appeared among High Court documents. But Mr Justice Swanwick spent much more time discussing the correspondence between me and a Faber secretary who left to work for one of T S Eliot's publishing friends in New York. Brigadier Richard Miers was not the only Faber author to shock Strand-on-the-Green by committing suicide. The 30 or so riverside houses attracted authors as well as publishers, one of whom surprised T S Eliot by converting to Roman Catholicism before becoming a New York publisher. Naturally, when the young Faber secretary went to New York in 1961 there were many enquiries about 'Mr Eliot' and these found their way into a number of letters. It was, however, a photograph of another lavatory-seated cult figure without clothes sent to me which raised Louis MacNeice's eyebrows and those of his still-living BBC colleagues who saw it and met the sender at a BBC party at my home before she went to New York. A long way still lay ahead before the day when Faber and Faber published *Who's Had Who*.

Morley Kennerley, of course, knew better than most who Barbara Hutton and Jimmy Donahue had had over the years. How Jimmy laughed when he read the libel report on my book *No Surrender* when the verse about Mrs Simpson pinching our King had to be removed. And Jimmy did not write confidential memos to Morley Kennerley about the Duchess of Windsor being 'The best cocksucker I've ever known.' Prime Minister Attlee and his

law officers would probably not have understood the double meanings in my ditty *Going Down Town*, but they certainly knew who was having who both from the names I named and from their nude portraits in Evan's photographs. The disgraced Viscount Tredegar did not exile himself to Italy but used his time and fortune to such good effect that his once-implacable enemy, Clement Attlee, sent a representative to Evan's memorial service in 1949.

Dil de Rohan had reason to grumble when she returned from Paris to resume residence at Selwyn House and found that Evan had left her nothing from all the millions in his will. Evan was the Papal Chamberlain who never failed to obey papal commands, even to getting married. Prince Carlos de Rohan was a violet-eyed beauty lacking in fortune. Certainly after Dil Wrench, the American oil-heiress, met Carlos with Lonsdale Bryans at Schloss Derneburg in the Harz Mountains, Evan Tredegar had no doubts that Prince Carlos would camouflage both homosexuality and lack of fortune by marrying Dil. A number of books have stated how many million dollars Barbara Hutton paid out of her Five and Ten Cent Woolworth Stores' fortune to her various husbands and lovers, but although much talked about by Dil's friends and enemies, nobody knows what money or Standard Oil shares exchanged hands for Dil to become Her Serene Highness Princess Carlos de Rohan, a title which gave her the satisfaction of taking precedence when going into dinner over the mere Princess Barbara Hutton Mdivani.

There had been better times in Prince Carlos's family as seen by the controversial necklace given to Marie Antoinette by Cardinal de Rohan that played its part in bringing down the French royal family. The police were familiar with Dil's claims of lost or stolen jewels apart from those she insisted had been buried in the grounds of Pembroke Lodge. Certainly in 1992 newspaper pictures showed police with the latest equipment searching the grounds of another country house for the buried treasure of Dil's friend whose relation, a Fellow of All Souls, had benefitted from the friend's disputed will. Warden Sparrow might well have been a connoisseur proclaiming All Souls to have the best cellar in the UK, but he was hardly an arbiter of taste or discretion in name-dropping the famous in his reply to my satirical attacks on him for his own attacks on women.

Sir George Catlin wrote at length of his association with Clement Attlee, HG Wells, Arnold Bennett and Hugh Dalton in *For God's Sake Go*, a book which also gives reliable accounts of Dil and Mary Oliver hosting lunch parties at the rambling Pembroke Lodge and of Francis Rose entertaining Queen Mary at his Chelsea studio. But when Special Branch began to investigate the mysterious disappearance of Buster Crabb under the Russian leaders' warship, the friendly atmosphere I had known since 1944 at Selwyn House changed violently. Francis Rose was still a schoolboy when Dil

became a willing bartered bride, but Rose's 17th birthday party organised by Jean Cocteau became a battle-ground between the American and French sailors invited to the party. Cocteau's biographers describe Lady Rose wielding a large lobster to fend off her attackers, but Sir George Catlin wrote that he 'was never told whether Queen Mary's sense of humour rose to the occasion' when Evan Tredegar poured water through the studio ceiling onto Rose's royal visitor as she looked at the artist's work.

Rose and Ernst Röhm, Lonsdale Bryans and Evan Tredegar, Dil de Rohan and Catherine Devilliers had all figured in homosexual Berlin and all had known Hitler and Hess. When the British and American governments put an embargo on the Hess papers until 2017 the Iron Curtain still divided more than Berlin. But now, the Soviet Union's collapse and the independence of such countries as the Ukraine make the 2017 embargo seem obsolete. Yet would revelations of the full story about the Anglo-Ukrainian Council and similar bodies in the USA enhance Britain or America's image? And what famous names would emerge from the Hess papers as being responsible for terminating Lonsdale Bryans's peace missions aimed, as he wrote, at 'the overthrow of the Nazi regime and an early end to the war; saving by this means millions of lives.'

Certainly what Dil de Rohan told her Ministry of Information boss, Brendan Bracken, about the Wednesday Society in Berlin's Wannsee had long been known to Stalin via Baroness Budberg and Anthony Blunt. Meanwhile, the infamous Wannsee Villa has been opened as the Holocaust Memorial at a time when 16% of the former West Germany's population is anti-Semitic. A few days after the Memorial opened, its director wrote to me, 'Given the colonial and racial character of Hitler's war against the Soviet Union, which at the same time was the starting point of the genocide against the Jewish population, half a year before the coordination conference in Wannsee took place, and given the nature of German Fascism, I doubt it that anything could have prevented it from happening. But of course, it would be better, if we could read the Hess papers before 2017.'

It was Gabrielle D'Annunzio who spawned Fascism and bequeathed it to Mussolini. It was Adeline de la Feld who spurned D'Annunzio's sexual approaches and his books glamourising the past. She wanted votes for women, and not to be lined up with D'Annunzio's conquests on the Doria estates. Whatever significance might attach to the poems that Hess wrote to Hitler in their Landsberg prison cell in 1924, there can be no doubt about the accuracy of the press in reporting Mussolini's revenge on the crippled Prince Doria. Adeline de la Feld always felt guilty about her cousin's fate since she was the stronger half of the Filippo and Filippa team.

Adeline's friendship with Filippo and their preaching of the Socialism

he picked up at Cambridge added to strife in her family, especially with her brother Kenelm. The angry letters to the family lawyers show that Adeline was probably justified in regarding Kenelm as one of the Three Robber Baronets, although she never dared to call him such in his lifetime for he would have caused her further trouble over the married MP. And then there was the death of Desmond Parsons.

Desmond's still-surviving schoolfriend, James Lees-Milne, says that Desmond was 'apt to be discontented.' Adeline wrote of Desmond, 'Even in his Eton days if and when he complained of stomach aches he was ridiculed and told to eat less sweets. It seemed he was constantly the object of ridicule. Philosophically accepting the fact that he was unlucky, he felt frustrated and unfairly treated when, on the false and ridiculous accusation that he was weak of character and sure to make bad friends, he was not allowed to go to Oxford.' His elder brother, Michael, was not only the Earl of Rosse but head of the family fortune and he certainly did not want someone who was 'the object of ridicule' causing him embarrassment at Oxford University where Michael's friend John Sparrow had already become a Fellow of All Souls. But Michael himself made the worth of his own reputation clear when he asked Evelyn Waugh who recorded it, 'Rosse said to me, "What is this hall I am in?" I told him it was hired for the occasion. "What an extraordinary arrangement; and who are all these people - actresses I suppose or what?" I told him that they were my friends. "Indeed, and are any of them anyone one has ever heard of?" I think his manners are not good.' And many others beside Waugh thought Rosse's manners not good when he stood up in the dining room of the Gritti Hotel in Venice and punched a female relative.

John Sparrow knew Michael Rosse and his family at the time when Bridget Parsons was posing the burning question as to why she would not marry the handsome Prince George of Kent, and Sparrow formed decided views on why Bridget refused. Others have accepted Sparrow's views and have published them, but what concerned Adeline de la Feld was her nephew Rosse's vile treatment of his sister Bridget for her failure to secure him a royal brother-in-law in the Duke of Kent. Many years passed before Rosse lost his sense of social inferiority, and only then on becoming Princess Margaret's step-father-in-law.

But were the manners of Warden Sparrow in the ivory tower of All Souls any better when he made malicious telephone calls in the middle of the night or boxed the ears of Bridget's friend, James Pope-Hennessy? James had not resorted to cloak-and-dagger telephone calls but told Sparrow to his face that Sparrow had turned the warden's role at All Souls into 'a comic job.' Even in 1962 when Sparrow was only 55, Pope-Hennessy had told him, 'You are too old in any case to indulge in debauchery.' But Sparrow indulged his wit

on Oxford's men, not just on Helen Gardener, and he relished making anagrams from the names of other college heads, so that Asa Briggs became Sir Gas Bag, while Arnold Goodman - a man? No, Lord God.

Another author of the Evelyn Waugh vintage at Oxford is Peter Quennell who wrote, 'Cecil Beaton is one of the latest in a long line of royal iconographers which stretches back to the Norman Conquest of England.' Although Sparrow and certain of his cronies regarded Desmond Parsons as such an object of ridicule that he was not allowed to go to Oxford, nevertheless the more sensitive and perceptive Cecil Beaton felt his summer party of 1937 overshadowed by the news of Desmond's death. Adeline particularly disapproved of the Cecil Beaton set and wanted to get her nephew Desmond Parsons away from what she regarded as its corrupting influence and she wrote that he went to China to translate its poets, just as she had left England 30 years earlier to translate literature. She also said in *My Zapiski* 'having penetrated far enough into the Italian penumbra and peninsula I was drawn to the next terra-incognita, RUSSIA. I set myself the task of learning Russian with the ultimate idea of translating some Russian author....Bristling with new ideas and new knowledge I returned to England, bursting with the desire to impart it. But no one wanted to listen; if I wanted to talk about Russia they were bored. In my trunks was the whole of Chekov's work in Russian. I had learnt with joy that he was as yet unknown in England and untranslated into English.'

Chekov was certainly read in England and his plays performed on the stage by Cecil Beaton's friends three decades later when Desmond sailed to China. A playwright much involved with Beaton was Enid Bagnold of Rottingdean whose biographer Anne Sebba wrote that 'Enid referred to him in letters' as 'Miss Beaton.' Desmond's companion in China, the family friend Harold Acton, wrote to me in 1987, 'Desmond Parsons was indeed a close friend of mine...He had a romantically adventurous spirit and thought he could emulate Peter Fleming...' Peter Fleming and Adeline de la Feld had both recorded their Brazilian adventures and Adeline found 'Miss Beaton's' circle corrupting, not because of the homosexuality that after all had been one of her own family's 'secrets' since the days of William Beckford and his cousin, but because of the Beaton circle's anti-Semitism.

In 1938 Commander R Fletcher MP wrote in *Time and Tide*, 'If it makes a German happy on his way home after beating the Jew, well, what is a Jew? Not even a "person of importance or even of the upper classes" while Miss Bagnold is both.' Enid Bagnold had a most distinguished Jew living not far from her Rottingdean home, Lt-Col Leonard Messel of Nyman's, whose daughter Anne married Adeline de la Feld's nephew, Michael, the Earl of Rosse, on 19 September 1935. Until then, Bridget Parsons had long been

admired in fashionable ballrooms such as Enid Bagnold's friend, Lady Cunard's, as the brilliant dancing partner of her brother Michael, and Bridget quickly took a dislike first to his wife Anne and later to Anne's son by a previous marriage, Antony Armstrong-Jones. The marriage delighted Michael's Aunt Adeline, however, because she regarded Leonard Messel as one of the most enlightened about what was happening in prewar Nazi Germany. Some might regard Messel as a self-made Jew, but Adeline admired such men compared with her uncles on both sides of her family who went into the bankruptcy courts from squandering unearned fortunes on keeping up with the royal family.

Besides daughter Anne, Leonard Messel had a son, Oliver, who became a theatre designer as did Cecil Beaton who went to New York in 1928 and wrote, 'I am only half a celebrity which is such a maddening plight to be in. I'd seen many journalists lately and had been interviewed for gossip paragraphs and alas there was nothing about me but a lot about Oliver Messel.' The 24 years old Beaton listened 'wide-eyed' as Beverley Nichols told him of his first-hand knowledge that Oliver Messel, Noel Coward, Somerset Maugham and many others connected with the theatre were likewise homosexual. However, it was not until 1930 in Vienna that Beaton's rage against the half-Jewish Oliver Messel combined with sexual jealousy because Messel was travelling with Peter Watson. Beaton noted, 'There was something louche and tarty about his (Messel's) way of conveying that he (Watson) was interesting.'

Besides being well-known as a painter, composer and author, Lord Berners had been a diplomat for years in Rome and a familiar figure at the Doria homes. Adeline de la Feld could not have been more pleased when Gerald Berners took a photograph of Mussolini which Il Duce liked so much that he ordered enlargements as a Christmas present. The enlargement showed, however, the phallus of the statue behind in an embarrassing position which infuriated Mussolini but amused many who got the card. Berners was in revolt against society when, using his pen-name Adela Quebec, he wrote a send-up of his set in *The Girls of Radcliff Hall* in 1937, the year of Desmond Parsons's death. Oliver Messel became Olive Mason, Cecil Beaton passed as Cecily Seymour and Peter Watson the Lizzie Johnson of the book.

Gerald Berners involved Gertrude Stein and Francis Rose in his stage productions which included a Cochran revue and music for film scores. Not only paintings by Francis Rose crowded the walls of Dil de Rohan's flat from the years he had a studio there, but also others by Pavel Tchelitchew, the Russian painter Edith Sitwell loved in vain since he was yet another of Peter Watson's lovers. It seemed impossible to visit Selwyn House without seeing Peter Watson as he financed and co-edited *Horizon* magazine published

from the ground floor flat so envied by Dil and Katusha who hated climbing stairs to the top. Peter Watson wove so many strands of my life together as his father, Sir George, had paid the first instalment of £30,000 to buy a peerage from Maundy Gregory. Sir George died before being ennobled and his executors sued Gregory which set alarm bells ringing both at Lanson House in Barry and the Tory and Liberal camps. Sir George Watson made his fortune from the Maypole dairy shops such as the one in Belfast my mother used. It specialised in margarine which Watson invented.

But Maundy Gregory was also the founder of the Anglo-Ukrainian Council and its campaign to restore the Skoropadsky family from which the Ukraine traditionally got their Hetman. Funds collected for that campaign and also from the sale of honours were going to Gregory's homosexual lovers who also blackmailed him. In the King's Bench Division of the High Court in 1933, Louis Tufnell sued Prince Paul Skoropadsky about the funds he had collected for Gregory. Nobody watched this trial more closely than Cecil Beaton who knew the Skoropadsky family through Desmond and Bridget Parsons whose Aunt Adeline had stayed with the Ukrainians before the Revolution. After being sent down from Oxford, Peter Watson went to Munich, much to the delight of his fellow-Etonian, Lonsdale Bryans, who shared Watson's interest in painting and in good-looking young painters.

In *Blind Victory* Lonsdale explained, 'Finally I wrote to Herr von Mackensen, the German Ambassador in Rome, and son of the Field Marshal. While staying at Derneburg I had met his uncle, who had been Prince Munster's estate agent.' German Jewish wealth enabled Oliver Messel to keep up with Peter Watson's own inherited fortune, and Cecil Beaton hated Messel for that too. On the day war was declared in 1939 Beaton told his publishers, Batsford, that he would accept their commission for the spoof *My Royal Past* and write it as a revenge for the memoirs produced by 'fatuous, tragic old minor Royalties.' Lonsdale Bryans's 'intention, therefore, of precipitating this liquidation of the Nazi Reich, I reflected that these highly placed German nationalists, who had their roots in the pre-Hitler past and with many of whom I was intimate, might not improbably be willing to help our cause by organizing a secret anti-National-Socialist group within the very citadel of the enemy High Command. With due encouragement from us and at an auspicious moment, these men might well be competent to stage a *coup d'etat*.'

But it was not Prince and Princess Munster at their medieval Schloss Derneburg who grew angry over Beaton's spoof, but Queen Mary whose relations were mainly German princelings. Adeline de la Feld felt equally outraged because Bridget Parsons took part in the book even though Bridget's royal past had included her refusal to marry Queen Mary's son, Prince George

at a time when many wanted him to be King of Poland. It did not surprise Adeline that Cecil Beaton ran foul of the American Jewish community and she strongly disapproved of the encouragement he gave to Bridget's irrational dislike of the Messel family. But Peter Watson was delighted and wrote to Beaton, 'It is quite one of the best jokes I have ever seen... Also I consider the coinciding of publication with the queen's photographs perfect da-da and proof of my old contention, your implacable will to shock. It is in fact a masterstroke even to see the book with its sinister undercurrents of sex, perversions, crass stupidities and general dirt, beaming severely from Maggs Bookshop in Berkeley Square. I admit you are the only person in Europe alive able to put such a thing across and I consider it a remarkable achievement.'

Dil and Katusha hated margarine and to them it seemed just the short of cheap and vulgar substitute which could be expected from the cheap and vulgar George Watson, who, like Headmaster Lonsdale on Vancouver Island, had started with a milk-float going from door to door. Because his Eton fees were paid for from the margarine fortune Peter suffered from being considered *nouveau riche* and like Beaton set out to shock the Establishment with scandals. Many young men fell in love with Peter who spent the margarine fortune on promoting the arts, such as financing *Horizon* and being a founder of the Institute of Contemporary Arts. He was also art editor of *Horizon* and knew John Minton's favourites at the Royal College of Art and promoted their arts in and outside the bedroom.

But because Peter was rich, as Dil herself had been until the 1929 Wall Street crash, she set out to please him, always in hopes of getting the *Horizon* ground floor flat. People charmed by Peter simply accepted his habit of picking up lovers less sophisticated than Oliver Messel, Cecil Beaton and Pavel Tchelitchev who painted Peter looking like 'a knight in shining armour' according to Stephen Spender who had moved into Selwyn House in 1939, five years before Dil. The art students allowed to use the flat by Katusha and John Willis during Dil's years in Paris in the late 1940s certainly thought the well-heeled Peter Watson a knight in shining armour when it came to buying their pictures. Adeline de la Feld went to Paris to try and find a solution to Nancy Cunard's problems with her mother over the black musician, Henry Crowder, Nancy being aided and abetted by the Parsons's schoolfriend, Brian Howard. And Adeline inclined to more than a little sympathy for the black Denham Fouts who thrashed two lovers for their public school behaviour, first Cecil Beaton and then Peter Watson. But Adeline's sympathy dried up when Fouts turned to little boys and drugs, and was neither surprised nor sorry to hear the sadist died of drugs in a Rome lavatory in 1948. The art patron, Peter Watson's masochism repelled Adeline, but in contrast, because of the many affairs Dil and Mary Oliver had enjoyed with Moroccan women they

could take on 'The Black Angel' Denny Fouts who found his niche in literature as Paul in Christopher Isherwood's **Down There on a Visit**, just as Fouts's lover, Peter Watson was enshrined as Lizzie Johnson by Lord Berners.

It was, however, in 1960 that Cecil Beaton's hatred of his rival, Oliver Messel, reached white heat when Messel's nephew, Tony Armstrong-Jones, married Princess Margaret. Beaton could not sleep at night for rage since he regarded the newly-created Lord Snowdon as 'Not even a good photographer.' He called the royal marriage, 'This Cinderella-in-reverse story,' and felt maliciously pleased when his old friend Bridget Parsons stole some of the wedding headlines by getting drunk and starting her far from silent feud against life at Kensington Palace. In the year of the Snowdons' wedding, Beaton brought out a new edition of **My Royal Past** complete with all the old 'perversions and general dirt,' as well as photographs of Bridget Parsons and friends such as Sir Michael Duff who liked to appear in public as Queen Mary. But Bridget's and Cecil's mutual loathing for the Messel family, and the Snowdons' life-style on the island of Mustique in houses designed by Oliver Messel, was only secondary to Adeline's remembrance of how the same set had so ridiculed her beloved nephew Desmond Parsons that he put a great distance between himself and the Beaton set by going to China where he picked up the disease which killed him.

I was born in 1928, but 20 years earlier Prince Doria - 'The Magnificent Alfonso' - had already introduced Gladys Deacon, the daughter of his mistress, to his niece Adeline. As she was so passionately escaping from the damn Family Place ruled, but not owned, by her tyrannical father, Adeline admired her Italian uncle's way with women however critical he might be of the Futurism she preached. In 1921 Gladys Deacon married the Duke of Marlborough and she quickly gathered young authors into her set, including Evan Tredegar and Harold Nicolson. She fascinated Cecil Beaton, particularly with such remarks as, 'If I have a daughter I shall call her Lady Syphilis Spencer-Churchill.' Beaton noted 'I should have enjoyed her so much and could have learnt a lot from the way she behaved.' The duchess's life with the Doria family in Rome and at Blenheim Palace seemed so vivid to Beaton when he read Hugo Vickers's biography of her, that he made Vickers his own official biographer.

For a number of years during the 1920s Adeline kept up with Gladys Marlborough even spending two months with the duchess's family in New York. But Adeline began to write more and more against Gladys's friends who remained faithful to Gladys's admirer, the lecherous and Fascist Gabrielle D'Annunzio, and the two women drifted into enmity. The undoubtedly vain Cecil Beaton remained as courageous and outrageous as the Duchess Gladys, and nobody was better pleased to admire Cecil's love of sensation than Peter

Watson when he congratulated Beaton on **My Royal Past**. For Adeline, after Desmond Parsons died, her past in England had been too painful. Beaton wrote of 'the appalling dogfights that Denham had with Peter. They are just what Peter needed.'

Michael Rosse did not want his brother Desmond at Oxford for Rosse would face neither the embarrassment he feared by Desmond being ridiculed nor the embarrassment of his brother getting into 'bad company.' It was Rosse's Oxford friend and later brother-in-law, Oliver Messel, who became the object of hatred in Cecil Beaton's life and it was Beaton who had no hesitation in using Desmond Parsons in their mutual malice. Then Denham Fouts appeared as 'The Black Angel,' but soon he too became one of Beaton's special hates. Truman Capote stated that Beaton loathed The Black Angel with an 'unconsumed passion.' But Capote had also commented to Hugo Vickers about Beaton, 'Peter Watson was the only great love of his life, the only thing that absorbed him.'

The hatred between the two clever designers Cecil Beaton and Oliver Messel, took up much of Adeline de la Feld's time since it impinged on her two nephews, Michael Rosse and Desmond. Moreover, Oliver Messel was also uncle to Michael Rosse's two sons, William and Martin Parsons, and also uncle to Lord Snowdon as the three were the sons of Oliver's sister, Anne Rosse by two marriages. As the person responsible for clearing out Adeline's effects from Forest Farm and George Balcombe's home, I had to exercise considerable discretion about which family heirlooms went to which person, because Adeline relied on my decisions, which she often pointed out in letters to her sister Lady de Vesci who had destroyed so many of Adeline's papers before Princess Margaret went to stay at Womersley Park. I doubt if Adeline would have been pleased to see the names of her nephews on the same page as those of Peter Watson and Denham Fouts, about that same summer party of 1937 described by Hugo Vickers more than a decade after she died in Canada.

For 25 years I was the buffer between the warring factions, trying above all else to help Adeline understand the much misunderstood but ill Bridget Parsons who turned against her old friends if they went to Mustique. Adeline escaped to Canada to build a new life but the dust of the past was never allowed to settle. The urn with Adeline's ashes had been interred in Victoria's Christ Church Cathedral by the time of my last visit to the Deepdene, the Surrey mansion where King Edward VII had refused to sit down to dinner until Winston Churchill turned up to occupy the 14th place at table.

When I saw the Deepdene it had, like Clumber, Denby Grange and Forest Farm, become one more damn Family Place rased to the ground. Only

the mausoleum Thomas Hope had built for his family remained, though barely visible, buried by earth to its roof to keep out grave-robbers. As I stood looking at the excavation left by the most recent would-be thieves, I felt sorry that the dust of the Hopes within could not be left undisturbed. Thinking of Adeline as I showed my companions her wedding ring from Clumber chapel and Jamie's snake ring from Sicily on my little finger, I knew that the dust of my own link with the Hopes and their jewels would similarly never be allowed to settle.

Shortly after this book went to press in 1992, the British Government had second thoughts about the amount of dust gathering on the Hess papers. I had raised the matter in the High Court some months previously so the lifting of the embargo did not surprise me. But one file still remains secret and others of importance were burnt years ago on the instructions of the former Minister of Information, Brendan Bracken.

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